

THE BIGGEST **STAR WARS** PARTY EVER! DETAILS PAGE 24

STAR WARS[®]

INSIDER

EXCLUSIVE
ATTACK
OF THE
CLONES
PHOTOS INSIDE



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Insider 58

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Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christiansen) returns to Tatooine in *Attack of the Clones*, where his struggle with the dark side begins. Hate to say it, but we don't like his chances. Luckily, we know he looks good in black leather. photo by Keith Hamshire



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photo by Keith Henshere

"The Rebels have been crushed.

The Empire has assumed control of this publication. Imperial transmissions resume immediately."

Darth Vader (Jason Brooks) and his lackey (Randy Krotzer) temporarily take over the editorial offices during last issue's photo shoot—at least until we wrestled the mouse back.

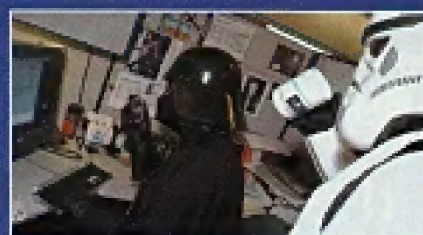


photo by Craig Cudnochusky

FANS OF FANTASY



By the time this issue hits the street, some of you are already making plans to stand in line for tickets. While we

like to think of ourselves as devoted fans—and we'll be celebrating the arrival of *Attack of the Clones* with millions of others in May—the ticket-line phenomenon still amazes us. If you think standing in line twenty-four/seven for tickets is something, you should see some of the other ways our fellow fans demonstrate their passion for *Star Wars*.

We've enjoyed meeting several *Star Wars* fan groups this past year, and we soon discovered that no two are the same. Despite the shared enthusiasm, these organizations are as unique as individual fans. Even though many have similar goals—charity drives and family events are popular—each has its own specialty or quirk. Road Squadron is a perfect example, a group of fans who take their obsession to the streets with customized vehicles.

While *Star Wars* fans are perhaps the most fervent of fantasy buffs, they're not alone—not by a longshot. This has already been a great year for fantasy movies, and it's been easy for the mass media to concoct a rivalry out of a confluence of terrific films. In fact, their popularity only proves again that fantasy is not some niche genre but a powerful means of mythic storytelling. With compelling icons of evil for our heroes to face, fantasy allows us to embrace the basic human morality we sometimes dismiss as as merely romantic or, worse, precious. The fact is, our values never became trite. Rather, the banality of everyday life, the awful weight of our tragedy-obsessed news, and our own jaded acceptance of a numbing commercial culture have simply clouded our minds like some manipulative old Jedi.

Fantasy lets us shrug off all that nonsense and revel in the pleasure of simple conflicts between what we know is right and what we know is wrong. Do some people say fantasy is for kids? Do some mistake simple for simplistic? Only the weak minded or the weary.

Fortunately, most people have no problem letting themselves enjoy good fantasies, as the hordes of *Star Wars* fans prove. What's even better than the number of people who embrace fantasy is that many of them embrace each other for their shared interest, so we get fan organizations.

Yes, all this is preaching to the choir, since if you're reading these pages you clearly already love fantasy. Still, you probably know someone who's just a little too wrapped-up in work or current events to relax, open up the imagination, and enjoy a good story full of larger-than-life heroes and villains. Have pity on that poor benighted friend, and tempt him out to play lasertag with your local *Star Wars* group. Or buy an extra ticket for *Attack of the Clones* after that grueling month-long wait in line.

Picnicking with the Seattle *Star Wars* Society, partying with the fabulous Star Ladies, and knowing we can always call on the local garrison of the Fighting 501st when we need a stormtrooper makes us pinch ourselves now and then just to make sure we haven't slipped into George Lucas's galaxy—not that we'd mind, as long as we got to be Jedi, or at least bounty hunters.

Dave Gross, Editor-in-Chief

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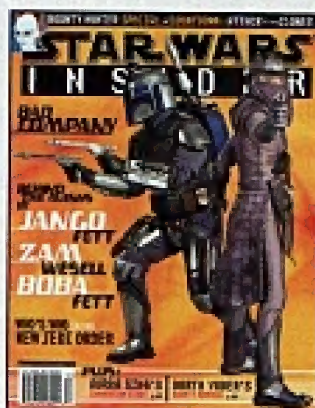
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4 STAR WARS INSIDER

This month's most frequent topics included plenty of awe-struck responses to the first three Attack of the Clones trailers, several indignant defenses of a certain prevaricating Jedi Knight, and some stern (and deserved) rebukes for a bad moment in spoiler warnings. Read on for more thoughts from readers like you. Well, not just like you. Some of them don't dress as well, and few have your easy charm and natural intelligence. Say, have you renewed your subscription recently?



HANDMAIDEN HEAVEN

On behalf of the Royal Handmaiden Society, I beseech you to stop with all the Aura Sing articles and focus on a more true female force in the newest addition to the Star Wars universe: The Handmaidens; Sabé, Rabé, Eirtaé, Saché, and Yané.

These fine young women and the actress/models who portray them receive too little credit. Especially the wonderful Kiera Knightly, who portrayed Sabé, the Queen's decoy. Kiera was a wonderful impersonator, and even Natalie Portman's mother confused Kiera with Natalie on one occasion.

Set to Stun

Amazing. Absolutely amazing. The first images from Attack of the Clones were very unexpected to a fan who's been trying to avoid all spoilers. The preview was so dark and moving. My favorite image



would have to be of Obi-Wan Kenobi hanging off that vessel flying through the dark city night of Coruscant. Well done. It's going to be a long wait to next May!

Ryan Pominville
Hudson, WI

Responses to the trailers keep streaming in, but they all end with the same comment: It'll be a long wait indeed, but well worth the wait!

Sabé risked life and limb acting as Queen while Padmé ran around Tatooine and the ever-so-talented Aura Sing looked from right to left during a Podrace.

Frankly, I'm disappointed in the Insider. Issue 57 was the third time you have exhibited the lackluster "bounty hunter" in some way, shape, or form on the cover of your magazine.

Let's find Kiera Knightly and have an interview with an actress

who actually did something in The Phantom Menace, besides displaying the most excellent power of turning her head.

Emma Higinbotham
East Lansing, MI

Don't be so quick to dismiss Aura Sing. Emma, Remember, she's got a legion of fans, not to mention a really big gun. Even so, giving more credit and attention to those

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 90



WANNA RUMBLE?

Write to: REBEL RUMBLINGS, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057, or e-mail SWinsider@wizards.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and space considerations. All mail MUST include your full name and home city. Star Wars Insider is not responsible for any unsolicited material received. Due to time constraints and the volume of letters received, individual responses are not possible. Other than that, what is thy bidding, my master?

[CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT] Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen), deep in the bowels of Coruscant, tries to get answers to some vital questions. » Senator Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman) gets some disturbing news in *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones*. » Qui-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor) has his hands full fighting a wily bounty hunter. » Intent on not losing his prey in the skyplanes over Coruscant, Anakin throttles up his speeder.

ATTACK OF THE CLONES UP

BY DAN MADSEN

Trailer Parts

With *Attack of the Clones* only a few months away, fans are once again relishing every image they can find of the next *Star Wars* adventure. Thus, when the first trailer hit in November with *Monsters, Inc.*, fans were ecstatic. That teaser was only to whet our appetites, as producer Rick McCallum noted, referring to the second, longer version, which went out with *Harry Potter*.

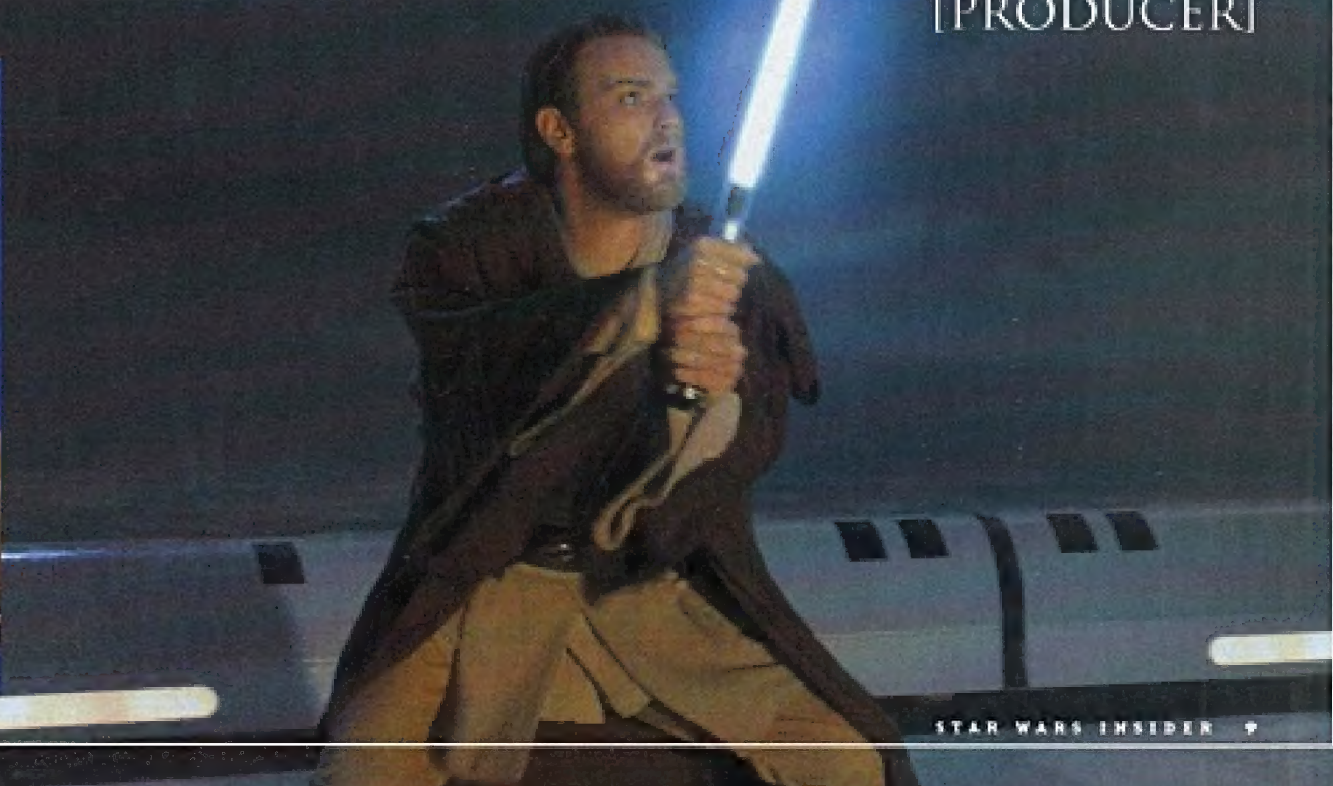
"The trailers are cut at the Ranch under Jim Ward's Marketing group," explains McCallum. "They bring their own editors in. Once they get that cut done, then we are responsible for getting out the 5,000 to 10,000 prints that are needed."





DATE

WITH RICK MCCALLUM
[PRODUCER]



ATTACK OF THE CLONES UPDATE



[TOP LEFT] Watto returns in Episode II, this time with some protection against the blazing suns for his bald head.

[MIDDLE] Jango Fett (Temuera Morrison) confronts an unexpected visitor on the Kamino landing platform as Boba Fett (Daniel Logan) looks on from atop Slave I's ramp.

[BOTTOM] Anakin (Hayden Christensen) mounts a borrowed swoop bike and speeds across the Tatooine dunes on an urgent mission.

Title Treatment

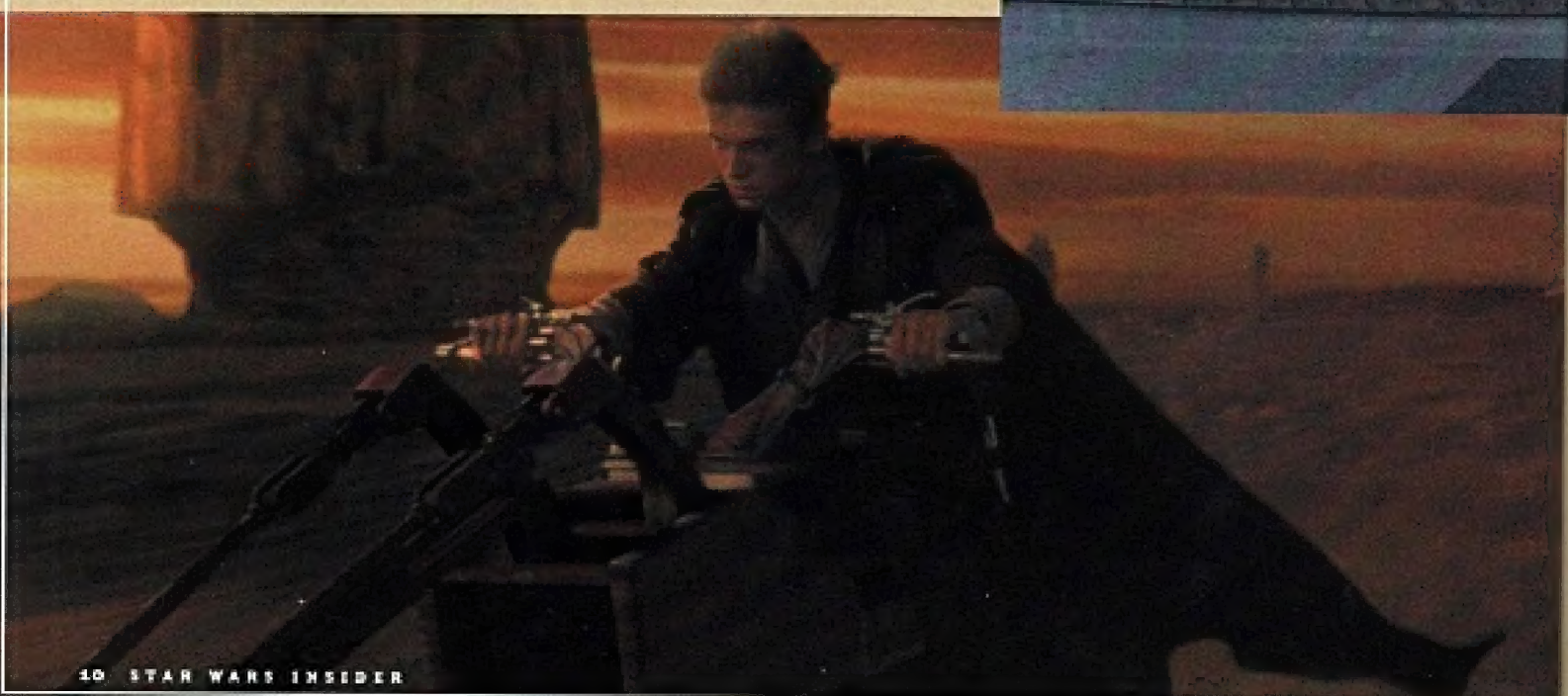
Along with the new trailer is the first wave of marketing with the new title in place: *Attack of the Clones*. McCallum feels that it fits with the intended style of the *Star Wars* movies.

"The reaction to this title has been no different from the reaction to *The Phantom Menace*," he says. "People have to see the movie and then decide whether they like the title. It's no different from the title of the original films. I mean, *The Empire Strikes Back* sounds like an old-time serial. Some of the criticism I have read has been that the title

sounds like some old-time serial film. Hello? What do they think these films are? George has always said that he wanted these films to harken back to the days of the old serials. So this title is appropriate to the content of the films."

Finishing Touches

The production team was in England for approximately two weeks at the end of September. "We've had five days of pick-ups," McCallum says. "Little inserts, cut-aways, and other minor things. We weren't



[TOP RIGHT] Jet pack blazing, Jango Fett (Temuera Morrison) aims at Obi-Wan Kenobi during a desperate fight.



doing anything major. We also started our looping with all of the English actors. We had only a handful of the cast here—we don't need everyone for these shots."

Back in San Rafael, Industrial Light & Magic continues the arduous task of completing the state-of-the-art effects. "ILM is continuing to do amazing work," McCallum relates. "They have just finished about 1,000 shots, [and] we

are right on schedule. We have about 1,000 more to do. Everything is going really well."

Bridging the Eras

Although the design team's mission is to develop new and unique weapons, ships, and architecture, they also have a specific continuity to keep in mind. Even so, that continuity is not foremost on their minds, even as the events of the prequels approach the time of the classic trilogy.

"They are really two separate branches," McCallum stresses. "They are separated by so many years. The next time the story is picked up, in Episode IV, it's almost 20 years later, because Luke Skywalker is around 20 years old. So there is a conscious thought to get us closer to that [period], but we really don't sit down and attempt to make things look like they used to."

Most feature films deviate little from the shooting script once production begins. On

"THERE HAVE BEEN AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF CHANGES TO THE SCRIPT. IT WAS VERY, VERY FLEXIBLE ALL THROUGHOUT THE MAKING OF THE FILM."

—RICK MCCALLUM

Attack of the Clones, however, McCallum says there were many changes to the screenplay along the way to allow them the freedom to keep improving it. "There have been an enormous amount of changes to the script. It was very, very flexible all throughout the making of the film."

Nevertheless, the script is "the foundation for everything we do," says McCallum. However, he adds, "If we have two characters who work together on screen really, really well, we'll take advantage of that and write more scenes for them. We get an opportunity to move everything so if we see something working well, we'll take advantage of that and add more to it."

Homecoming

For many of the Australian crewmembers there was a feeling of déjà vu when they traveled to Tunisia to film the scenes that take place on Tatooine. Although none of them had been involved in the shooting of the original *Star Wars* back in 1976, the scenes they were filming looked strikingly familiar, since they had come back to the exact location where Luke Skywalker's home was filmed.

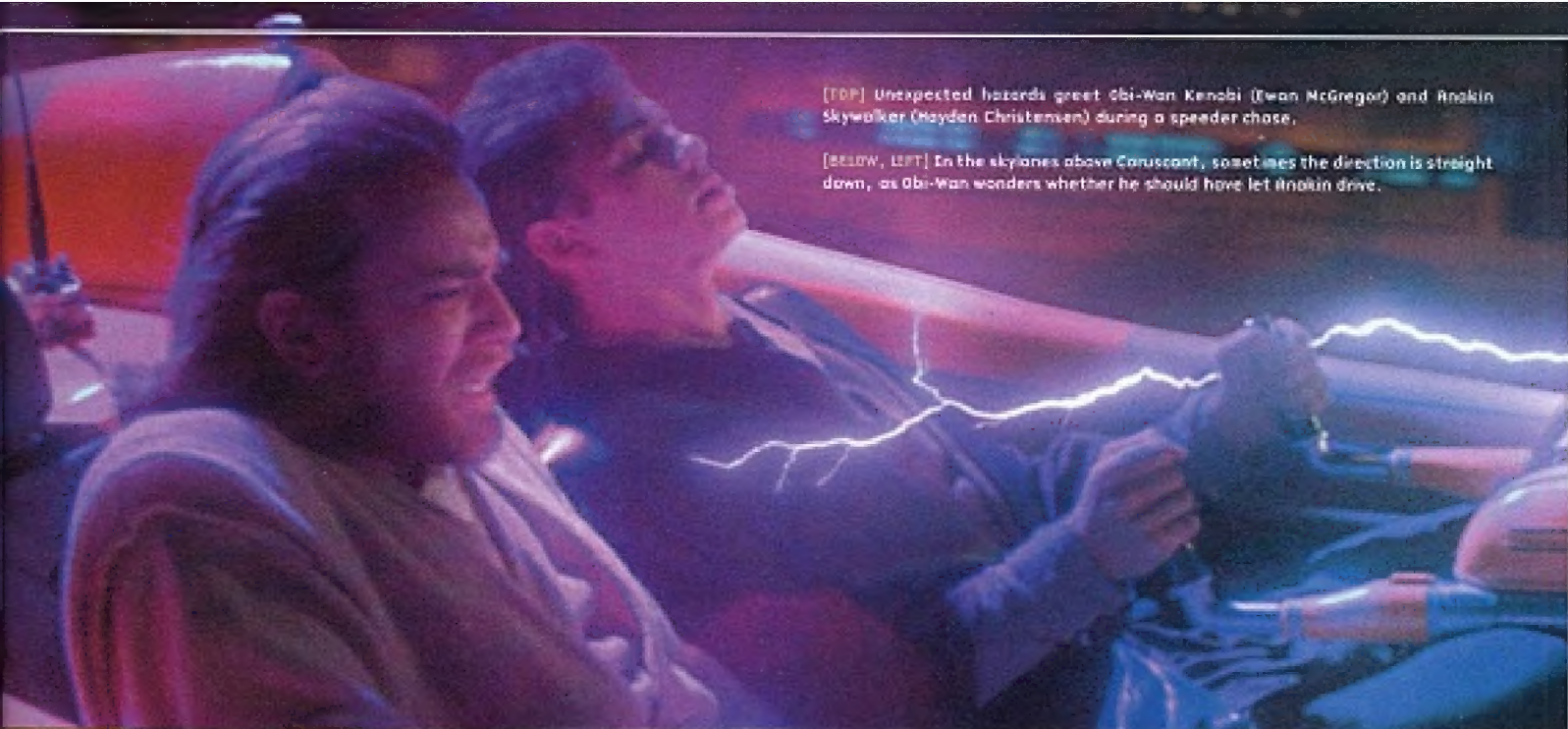
"It was amazing," McCallum says. "It was the very same location. We rediscovered it quite easily in fact. I had researched many of these shooting locations when I was doing the Special Edition, so I knew roughly where it was. And, in fact, David West Reynolds took me straight there."



[TOP] Senator Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman) isn't packing for a vacation in this scene shot in her Coruscant apartment. Photo by Sue Adler.

[BOTTOM] Anakin, Padmé, and Obi-Wan get ready to confront one of the biggest challenges of their lives.





[TOP] Unexpected hazards greet Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor) and Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) during a speeder chase.

[BELOW, LEFT] In the skyplanes above Coruscant, sometimes the direction is straight down, as Obi-Wan wonders whether he should have let Anakin drive.



LUM Visual Effects Supervisor John Knoll explains how a finished scene will look to Temuera Morrison, who plays Jango Fett. Photo by Paul Tiller.



"That location in Tunisia was very, very moving to the crew. You know, I had the whole Australian crew there and, for most of them, when they saw that location with everything put in place, it was a very powerful moment. They had all grown up with *Star Wars*."

"I love working in Tunisia and Morocco," says McCallum. "We spent a great deal of time in both countries for *Star Wars* and *Young Indy*. They are both countries I have been going to for 20 years, but Tunisia has always been a favorite of mine. We have a wonderful production company there we use called CTV Services. It is a total Tunisian crew. They are just the most wonderful people. They work so hard and have a great sense of humor. We have a strong family in Tunisia."

World Travels

Traveling has been a part of Rick McCallum's world since he first started working with Lucasfilm on *The Young Indiana Jones*

The Episode II crew prepares Jon Wesell's speeder for imminent action. Photo by Giles Westley.



Chronicles. He has visited some of the most exotic locations around the world, and Tunisia is not his only favorite.

"I think the most amazing country to shoot in was India. I like the people, and to see what was going on there—the whole movement of human life from day to day—was so extraordinary and amazing. It's not impossible to make a movie there, but it is challenging.

"On the other hand, the most difficult country we've shot in was Turkey," he adds.

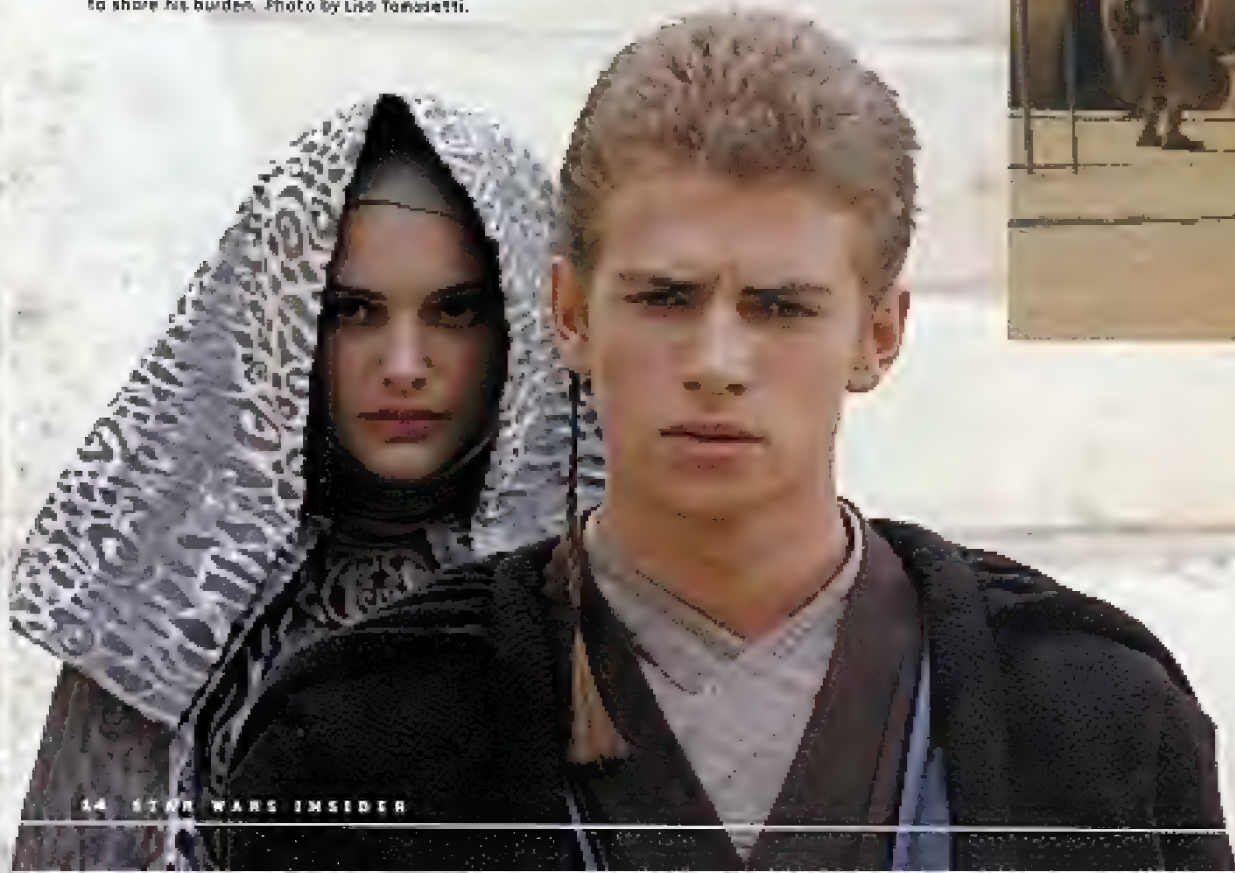
"There is no infrastructure there for filming. It was a nightmare. We are very happy with what we got there, but it was the most painful country to film in."

DVD

Back closer to home, McCallum is elated with the recent release of *The Phantom Menace* on DVD. It quickly broke many sales records. "We are very happy that it is doing so well."

As for earlier complaints that the DVD did not arrive sooner, McCallum explains that

Rankin (Hayden Christensen) has to confront some unpleasant truths, but Padmé (Natalie Portman) helps to share his burden. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

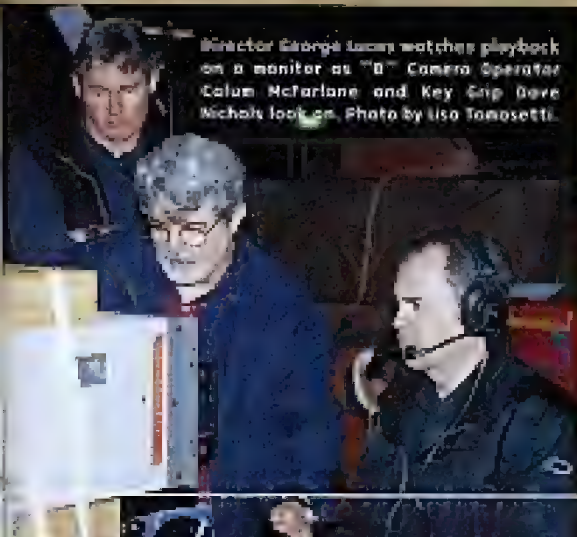
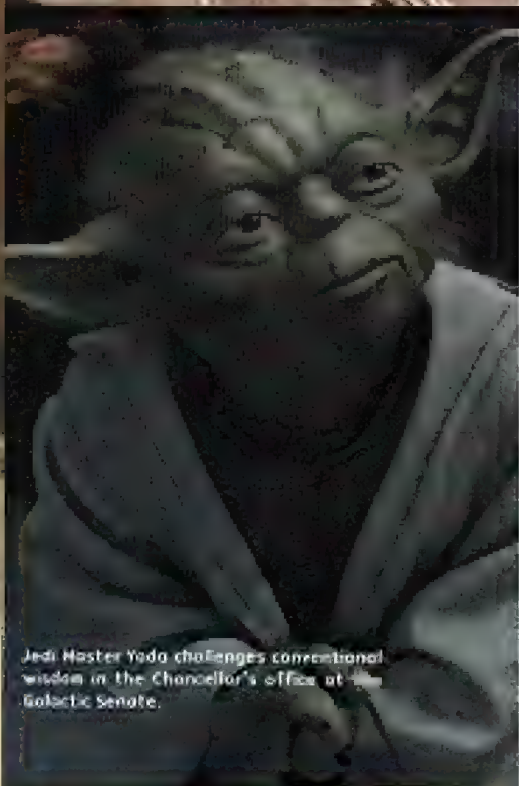


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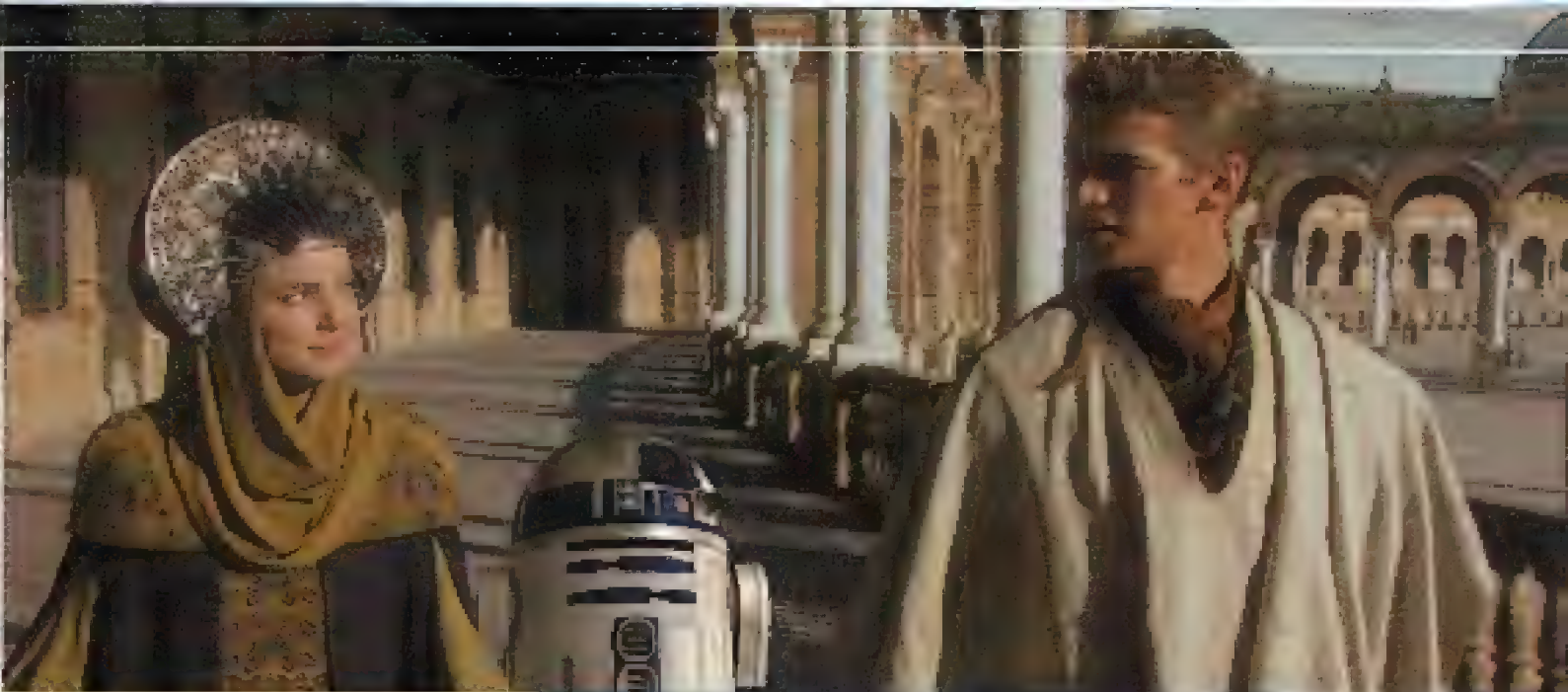
Director George Lucas watches playback on a monitor as "B" Camera Operator Colm McFarlane and Key Grip Dave Nichols look on. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

rushing it would have been a disservice to the fans. "I find it very weird that we get some criticism because we don't follow what happens in Hollywood. The average film will come out on DVD six months after it's released, but some are just thrown together."

Not so with *The Phantom Menace*, says McCallum. "It took us almost as long to make the DVD as it did to make the film. We have hundreds of new shots. I think everything we originally shot is back in there. It takes time—

Jedi Master Yoda challenges conventional wisdom in the Chancellor's office at the Galactic Senate.

six or seven months of serious work—then there's all the behind-the-scenes material to put together. You just can't pump that stuff out quickly. It's like making a movie. If you really want value for what you are spending your money on, then that's what it takes."



Back to the Future . . .

With the Episode I DVD now released and *Attack of the Clones* looming on the horizon, McCallum's next big challenge is pre-production on the final chapter of the prequel trilogy. However, that work must take the backseat while the crew concentrates on completing the current movie.

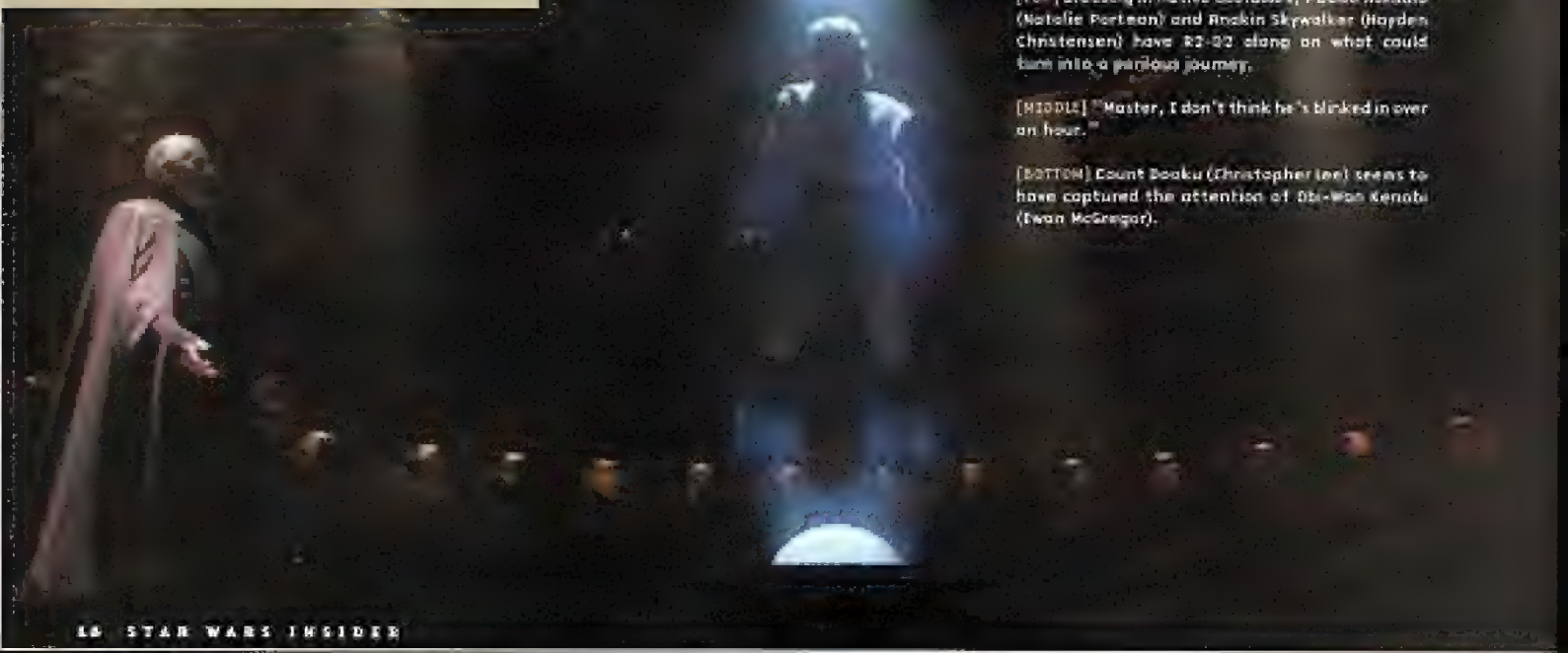
"I've got Eric Tiemens and Ryan Church in the art department working hard to finish [*Attack of the Clones*]. As soon as they are done, we'll start working on the next one. We'll hopefully see a first draft of the script by November of next year. George hasn't started on it yet, but as soon as we get through this next phase on *Attack of the Clones*, then he'll start cutting back and working on Episode III. I'll begin location scouting next summer as well." ☺



[TOP] Dressing in native costumes, Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman) and Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) have R2-D2 along on what could turn into a perilous journey.

[MIDDLE] "Master, I don't think he's blinked in over an hour."

[BOTTOM] Count Dooku (Christopher Lee) seems to have captured the attention of Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor).



» FROM THE WORLD OF LUCASFILM

by Scott Chernoff

STAR WARS EPISODE II

ATTACK OF THE CLONES

I SCREAM CLONES

Fans Turn Out for Unveiling of Episode II Teaser Trailers

Fans got their first glimpse of the newest *Star Wars* movie on the big screen when Lucasfilm unveiled the teaser trailer for *Attack of the Clones* on November 2, 2001. Presented exclusively with the Pixar blockbuster *Monsters, Inc.*, the tantalizingly short *Clones* teaser—a powerful stream of images from the film, accompanied by the ominously familiar breathing of Darth Vader—was the first in a trio of trailers unveiled in November. Following the *Monsters* teaser were a short starwars.com-exclusive trailer available to fans with the Episode I DVD and a longer theatrical trailer that played with pop culture phenomenon *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*.

Fan reaction to the teaser trailer, dubbed "Breathing," was positive, although some were surprised at how short and low-key the teaser played. "I thought it was too short," lamented fan Kurt Scholler, 31, who took in the trailer at the AMC Theater at Downtown Disney, the Disneyland-adjacent entertainment center in Anaheim, California. "All the images passed by and I was like, 'Oh man, this is gonna be sweet!' And then all of the sudden, it was over!"

But in its brief 60 seconds, the teaser made an impact. "When I saw Boba Fett's ship, I knew it was going to be cool," Scholler said. "Just seeing Anakin and Obi-Wan walk out together, and Obi-Wan in the beard, and I think their lightsabers are drawn, I'm not sure—but that gave me the same feeling as Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon in Episode I. Yoda looked awesome—that was a surprise. Seeing what looked like stormtroopers—I got that little tingle in my belly."

The images went by so quickly, Scholler said that he was still trying to figure out some of them. "There was a lightsaber battle, too, but you don't know who it is, like they really made it a point to not show who was fighting who," he said. "When I saw Watto come on, he was wearing a funny hat, and I thought they were celebrating Watto's birthday—I had no idea. It was like, 'Happy birthday, Watto! Tip your hat!'"

At the AMC Media Center 8 in Burbank, California, fan Chris Tallman, 31, was unequivocal in his praise. "The guy sitting next to us said he was disappointed because there was no dialogue, but I felt like it's a teaser, and all it's supposed to do is get me excited about seeing the movie—and it did its job," he said. "Going into it, I thought it would be pretty cool, but then when I actually heard the breathing and started seeing it, all of the feelings from being a kid kicked in again."

"I was happy with all of it," he continued. "All the characters looked cool. I liked seeing Obi-Wan suspended up in that thing—that was awesome. Seeing the Mandalorian-like jet pack for a second—all that looks good. Yoda looked good. And the idea of another lightsaber battle—it looked like it was Anakin having a battle with somebody, but I couldn't tell who—I'm fired up about it!"

Both fans interviewed had gone to see *Monsters, Inc.* on opening day specifically to see the Episode II teaser trailer—but both also said they were happy the teaser was attached to a movie they wanted to see anyway. "I saw *Meet Joe Black* opening day to see



"Our tracking shows that the sales velocity for Episode I is greater than *Gladiator*, the Number One-selling DVD of all time."

—Mike Dunn

Executive VP of Sales and Marketing
Twentieth Century Fox Home
Entertainment

EPISODE WON

Phantom Menace Shatters Records In DVD Debut

Finally, *Star Wars* fans, long hungry for the films' release in the exciting new medium of digital video disc (DVD), showed their devotion to the format and the saga by snapping up the first *Star Wars* movie released on DVD, Episode I: *The Phantom Menace*, in record numbers.

buoyed by the promise that Lucasfilm had gone all-out by including seven newly completed scenes and some of the most acclaimed supplemental material in the history of DVD (*Insider* #56), fans powered *The Phantom Menace* to an estimated 2.2 million copies sold in its initial week of release. That was enough for Episode I to break the record at the time for first-week DVD sales—and appeared to put *Phantom* on course to become one of the top-selling DVD releases of all time.

In fact, with nearly two-thirds of all available units sold in the first week, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment had to scramble to meet demand—and make sure stores had enough copies on the shelves to keep up with consumers clamoring for discs.

"Our tracking shows that the sales velocity for Episode I is greater

than *Gladiator*, the Number One-selling DVD of all time," Fox executive vice president of sales and marketing Mike Dunn told *Daily Variety*. "We're doing everything possible to insure that we are not in an out-of-stock situation at retail—but given the velocity of sales, it'll be close."

The two-disc set's status as one of the best-selling DVDs of all time was confirmed by Peter Busch, vice president for video at Musicland, which also operates the Sam Goody, Suncoast, On Cue, and Media Play stores. Busch declared, "The *Phantom Menace* DVD set a record when it sold more on its release day than any other title in Musicland's DVD history."

In earning more than \$45 million in its first week (\$17 million of that on the first day alone), *The Phantom Menace* beat the record set by 2001's prior top-selling DVD, *The Mummy Returns*, which only two weeks before debuted on DVD with over 2 million units sold. The achievement was all the more notable considering that, unlike *Mummy Returns*, Episode I had already been available on VHS video—and in fact had broken records when it sold five million

copies, good for over \$100 million, in its first 48 hours of video release in April, 2000. Noted Lucasfilm marketing head Jim Ward, "We're thrilled by the consumer reception of Episode I on DVD—this stellar sales performance is even more impressive given that it is nearly three years after its theatrical release and 18 months after its VHS release."

But will Episode I's staggering success on DVD convince Lucasfilm to speed up plans to release the saga's classic trilogy—Episodes IV through VI—in the digital format anytime soon?

Despite high consumer demand (A *New Hope* remains the most requested DVD on amazon.com and dvdfile.com), Lucasfilm has held fast to past statements that the classic trilogy would not be released on DVD until after Episode III's theatrical release in 2005. So far, the company still has no plans for a classic trilogy DVD release—but clearly, there are at least 2.2 million fans—including many at the *Insider*—who are more than ready to add more *Star Wars* episodes to our DVD collections. May the Force be with us.

"Seeing what looked like stormtroopers—I got that little tingle in my belly."

Chris Tallman—Burbank, CA

the Episode I trailer," Tallman said. "I don't know if I would have wanted to see that on opening day. But I would have seen *Monsters, Inc.* at some point because I've liked all the other Pixar films. Still, the reason I was here for this show on Friday afternoon was specifically for the teaser."

Said Scholler, "I was excited for both of them. Like Pixar, and the idea of the *Star Wars* trailer being on it was great."

Of course, it helps that *Monsters, Inc.* feels like a part of the *Star Wars* family. After all, Pixar, the pioneering digital animation studio that also created *Toy Story*, began its life as the computer graphics division of Lucasfilm before Apple Computer founder Steve Jobs

bought it. Also keeping it in the family was the casting of two *Star Wars* veterans as voice actors in *Monsters, Inc.*—the legendary Frank Oz (Yoda) as monster henchman Fungus, and Pixar vet John Ratzenberger (who played Major Dettin in *The Empire Strikes Back*) as the Abominable Snowman.

With the Episode II trailer attached to every print, *Monsters, Inc.* set records for the highest-grossing non-holiday opening weekend ever for an animated film (surpassing *Toy Story 2* and *Shrek*), a Disney film (topping *Pearl Harbor*).

Monsters' massive \$63.5 million haul more than tripled that of its closest rival, Jet Li's *The One*. But unlike *Meet Joe Black* or *The Siege*

(the movies that carried Episode I's teaser), *Monsters* was already expected to draw huge crowds, so determining just how much of its gross was due to a surge from *Star Wars* fans is difficult to gauge.

Still, *The Hollywood Reporter* wrote, "Although it's nearly impossible to gauge how much of an impact the trailer will have on the film's opening weekend performance, most experts agree that it should provide an added boost." Either way, it was yet another record-setting weekend in *Star Wars* history.

Episode II's "Breathing" teaser trailer and the longer "Forbidden Love" trailer are available for download at www.starwars.com.

STAR SIGHTINGS

by Scott Chernoff

» Jimmy Smits pays Tribute to Heroes • Sam Jackson gets down to Basic • and ILM unleashes *The Incredible Hulk*

On September 11, JIMMY SMITS (Ball O'Gana) was scheduled to co-host the Latin Grammy Awards, live from Los Angeles on CBS television. The event was postponed in the wake of the terrorist attacks on America, but 10 days later, Smits was one of the many actors and musicians participating in the multi-network telethon, *America: A Tribute to Heroes*.

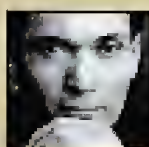
Appearing with his former *NYPD Blue* co-star Dennis Franz, Smits delivered a heartfelt tribute to the New York police officers who responded to the World Trade Center attacks. The event, seen by over 89 million viewers, raised over \$150 million for relief and recovery from the attacks on New York City and the Pentagon. Donations can still be made online at www.tributetoheroes.org, or mailed to: United Way of New York City, September 11 Telethon Fund, 2 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016.



Also saluting the heroes of September 11 were HARRISON FORD (Han Solo) and NATALIE PORTMAN (Padmé), who gave inspiring speeches at Paul

McCartney's benefit Concert for New York City, an all-star fundraiser which aired from Madison Square Garden on VH1 in October. Portman has also committed to her first post-*Attack of the Clones* project. She'll play a ghost in the supernatural romantic comedy *The Bride Wore Black*, and at presstime she was also in discussions to join the Merchant-Ivory drama *A Divorce*.

Jimmy Smits, meanwhile, is planning a return to television. The actor, who won an Emmy for his work on *L.A. Law* and a Golden Globe for *NYPD Blue*, has signed with ABC to executive-produce and star in at least 13 episodes of a new, as-yet-untitled drama series, targeted for the network's fall 2002 schedule.



SAMUEL L. JACKSON (Mace Windu) continues to be one of the busiest actors in the film industry. In addition to hosting the American Cinematheque's tribute to actor Nicolas Cage, Jackson has signed onto three major motion pictures. First up, he plays a hard-boiled cop in *No Good Deed*, a thriller based on Dashiell Hammett's short story *House on Turk*



Street that will also star Milla Jovovich (*The Fifth Element*).

Jackson was next going to star with Jennifer Lopez in *Tick Tock*. But he put that project on the back burner and turned instead to *Basic*, his first re-teaming with John Travolta since their memorable pairing in *Ripley*, for which they were both Oscar-nominated. John McTiernan, who directed Jackson in *Die Hard with a Vengeance*, helms the story of the investigation of a military operation gone awry.

Rounding out the actor's action trio is *XXX* (also known as *Triple X*), a summer 2002 release starring Vin Diesel (*The Fast and the Furious*) as a sort of extreme-sports version of James Bond, and Jackson as the government agent who recruits and trains him. Jackson isn't the only *Star Wars* vet working on *XXX*—prequel production designer GAVIN BOCCUET has joined the project, and actor MARTON



CSOKAS (Poggle the Lesser) plays a bad guy. Csokas also appears in the upcoming *George Clooney* from director Alex Proyas (*The Crow*).

The Skywalker family remains active: CARRIE FISHER (Princess Leia) has her own talk show on cable's Oxygen network called *Man Talk with Carrie Fisher* and George Lucas is scheduled to appear as a guest. JAKE LLOYD (Anakin Skywalker) appears in the fantasy drama *Die With Me*. PERNILLA AUGUST (Shmi Skywalker) will star in the Swedish love story *Far Away from Nifelheim*. MARK



HAMILL (Luke Skywalker) continues to dominate the field of voice-over acting. In addition to contributing character voices to last summer's Disney epic *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, Hamill has regular roles on two new series on the Cartoon Network—he plays Larry 3000 on *Time Squad*, and two villains, the Joker and Solomon Grundy, on *Justice League*.

EWAN MCGREGOR (Obi-Wan Kenobi) has chosen his next two films to follow Ridley Scott's *Black Hawk Down*. He'll star in the Scottish thriller *Young Adam*, and then in *Nautica*, which tells the story of a murder on a yacht from three different perspectives. Heather Ledger (*A Knight's Tale*) co-stars, and Ted Demme (*Blow*) directs.

Two new *Episodo II* actors started together on their own television show in Australia. LEEANNA



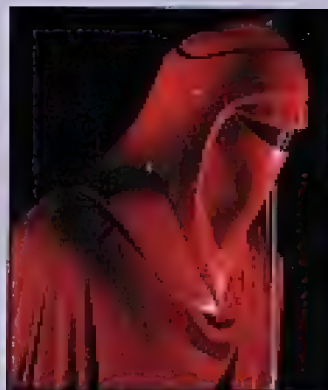
WALSMAN (Zam Wesell) and MATT DORAN (Eian



Skeezebaganno) play a couple on the bittersweet romance, *Love is a Four-Letter Word*. One proposed TV show with even more *Star Wars* stars is the animated *Nature's Guard*. In addition to the already-announced JEREMY BULLOCH

(Boba Fett), the voice cast of the series in development by the Canadian company LegendWorks Entertainment includes a gaggle of *Star Wars* luminaries, including PETER MATHEW (Chewbacca), WARWICK DAVIS (Wicket and Wala), MICHAEL SHEARD (Admiral Ozzel), and JEROME BLAKE (Bune Haako).

IAN MCDIARMID (Palpatine) and his creative partner Jonathan Kent have stepped down as co-artistic directors of England's acclaimed Almeida Theatre after a highly successful 11 year run—but not



LAST EXIT TO BROOKLYN

'Magic of Myth' Exhibits Growth in Final Stop of U.S. Tour

The groundbreaking traveling museum exhibit *Star Wars: The Magic of Myth*, which began its odyssey around the nation in 1997 at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. (*Insider* #35), will reach its final U.S. destination in April. After stops in San Diego (*Insider* #47), Minneapolis, Chicago, Houston, and

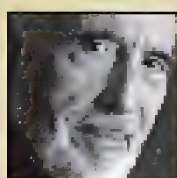
Toledo, the exhibition will make its last U.S. appearance in the New York City area, at the Brooklyn Museum of Art from April 5 to July 7.

With over 250 objects of *Star Wars* art from models and sketches to costumes and props, as well as an exclusive audio tour narrated by *Star Wars* legend James Earl Jones,

Magic of Myth has proven to be one of the most successful exhibitions ever staged by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). But SITES director of public relations Miriam Keegan told the *Insider* that the Brooklyn edition of Magic of Myth will be different from those that came before.

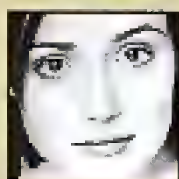


before McDiarmid performed in the playhouse's recent production of *Faith Healer*. **TERENCE STAMP** (Valorum) stars in the supernatural thriller *Revelation* and the comedy *The Guest*. **CELIA IMRIE** (*Bravo 5*)



appears in the British comedy *Lucky Break*, and also starred with **CHRISTOPHER LEE** (*Count Dooku*) in the BBC's fairy tale miniseries *Gormenghast*, which aired in the U.S. on PBS.

Two of Padmé's handmaidens are stepping into the cinematic limelight in upcoming British films. Episode I's lead handmaiden **KIERA KNIGHTLEY** (*Sebé*) stars in the comedy *Bend It Like Beckham*, while

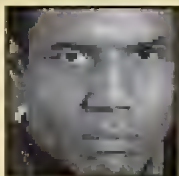


Episode II's **ROSE BYRNE** (*Dormé*) will appear with Henry Thomas (*E.T.*) and Marc Blucas (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) in the period romance *I Capture the Castle*.



Another Episode II newcomer, **SUSIE PORTER** (*Hermione Bagwa*) has lead roles in two Australian films, the stylish detective thriller *The Monkey's Mask* and the drama *Teesh & Trude*.

The Empire is invading British television—**KENNETH COLLEY** (Admiral Piett) guest-starred as a UFOlogist on the detective series *Midsomer Murders*, and **MICHAEL CULVER** (Captain Needa) has a regular role as a villainous officer on *Secret Army*. Representing the Rebellion is **JOHN RATZENBERGER** (Major Derlin), who appears in the independent film *Determination of Death* with sci-fi star Marc Singer (*V*). And throwing down for the Old Republic is **HUGH QUARSHIE** (Captain Panaka), who joins the cast of the UK hospital series *Holby City*.



Stunt performer **BOB ANDERSON**, who fought for Darth Vader in the classic *Star Wars* trilogy, was the swordmaster who trained the actors in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy—a cast which includes *Star Wars* stars Christopher Lee and Marton Csokas.

LAWRENCE KASDAN (co-screenwriter of *The Empire Strikes Back* and writer of *Return of the Jedi*) will direct *The Dreamcatcher*, based on the bestseller by Stephen King. Kasdan was also the recipient of the 2001 Distinguished Screenwriter Award from the Austin Film Festival and the Heart of Film Screenwriters Conference. In addition to *Empire* and *Jedi*, Kasdan wrote *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Big Chill*, and *The Accidental Tourist*.

Also honored was *Star Wars* creator **GEORGE LUCAS**, by the National Mentor Partnership for his efforts to promote the value of mentorship, which is the pairing of young people with caring, knowledgeable individuals to provide guidance to help steer America's youth toward success. Lucas will also be featured on the new season of the Encore cable series *The Directors*, which profiles major filmmakers through film clips and exclusive interviews.



IAIN McCaig (a key concept artist for Episodes I and II) created the cover for HarperCollins' sci-fi novel *Magic Time*, a collaboration between writer Marc Scott Zicree (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Babylon 5*) and *Star Wars* author **BARBARA HAMBLBY** (*Children of the Jedi*, *Planet of Twilight*). **ROGER CHRISTIAN** (who won an Oscar for his set decoration on the original *Star Wars* and was second unit director on *The Phantom Menace*) will direct *Dolph Lundgren in Alien Agent*, Christian's first film since *Battlefield: Earth*.

More *Star Wars* stars continue to establish their own official Web sites. **ANTHONY DANIELS** (C-3PO) leads the pack with the re-launch of his



www.anthonydaniels.com, which features archives of his past *Wonder Columns* from *Star Wars Insider*, among other goodies. Also on the Web are two popular *Star Wars* models: **MICHONNE BOURRIAGUE** (Aurra Sing) with www.michonne.com and **SHANNON BAKSA** (Mara Jade) with www.shannonbaksa.com.

INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC is plenty busy crafting the visual effects for Episode II, but that hasn't stopped George Lucas' pioneering effects company from taking on several other major projects. ILM's **DENNIS MUREN**, the special effects legend who's worked on all five *Star Wars* films, will supervise the effects for the long-anticipated *The Incredible Hulk*, the Marvel Comics adaptation to be directed by Ang Lee (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*). *Daily Variety* reported that *A New Hope* make-up master **RICK BAKER**—who recently teamed with ILM on *Planet of the Apes*—may also help the Hulk turn green.

In addition to *Hulk*, ILM has lined up an impressive array of upcoming features, including the second *Harry Potter* film, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, and the special edition of the classic *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*. Also on tap for ILM are *Men in Black 2*; Steven Spielberg's sci-fi adventure *Minority Report*, starring Tom Cruise; *The Time Machine*; Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York*, with **LIAM NEESON** (Qui-Gon Jinn); the Neeson-Harrison Ford action vehicle *K-11*; and the new film from *Sixth Sense* creator M. Night Shyamalan, *Signs*, starring Mel Gibson. **SKYWALKER SOUND** is finishing the mixes for *Hot Chick* with Bruce Willis and *One Hour Photo* with Robin Williams. ☺



CORRECTION: In *Star Wars Insider* #36, "Star Sightings" misspelled the name of *Nature's Guard* producer Jonathan Bryans. We regret the error.

"The release of Episode II will be during this exhibition, so the plan is that Brooklyn will be getting some additional objects from Episode II," Keegan said. "What those are, I don't know at this point."

In addition, the exhibition will also feature some newly-added objects from Episode I, as has happened at each stop on the tour. For Brooklyn, Queen Amidala's Senate costume, as well as the costumes of her handmaidens, will be added to join previous

additions like Darth Maul's costume and a model of Anakin's Podracer.

"This will be the first showing where all of the objects that have been added will all be there," Keegan said. "As we've gone along, different pieces were added to this exhibit, so this will be the first time that all will be on display." The Brooklyn Museum of Art will also present an adjunct presentation on the myth of the hero and heroine.

Fans attending the *Star Wars* Celebration in Indianapolis this May

will also have the opportunity to experience the Smithsonian's smaller (but no less compelling) exhibit *Star Wars: Art of the Starfighter* when it travels to the Children's Museum of Indianapolis from March 23 through May 13. Additionally, international fans will be heartened to learn that *The Magic of Myth* will turn up in the Home of Episode II—Sydney, Australia—at the Powerhouse Museum from September 17, 2002, through February 2, 2003.

But for U.S. fans who haven't caught *The Magic of Myth* yet, your last chance will be the engagement in Brooklyn, where the Museum of Art has a reputation for innovative, cutting-edge fare. "We're extremely excited about going to the Brooklyn Museum of Art," Keegan said. "We're expecting great things from them."

For more information, visit the Brooklyn Museum of Art online at www.brooklynart.org. ☺

MAY 3-5**INDIANA CONVENTION CENTER
INDIANAPOLIS, IN**

STAR CELEBRATION WARS

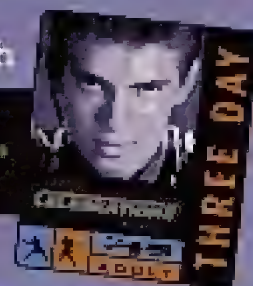
**In May,
the Force Will Be With You**
(Especially if you're in Indianapolis)

by **Mat Smith**

>>>Advance Recs: Logbook

>>>Earth/Western Hemisphere/North America/United States/Indiana/Indianapolis

>>>Transmitter: SWCZ/5-3-5 05/25[3]



When I attended the last one of these, I guess someone thought I'd be a great candidate to stand with this one. Works for me. I had a lot of fun back then and expect even more of the same this time around.

I set the ship down on the tarmac of Indianapolis without any problems. The city's apparently within a day's drive of half of the country's population, so a small, unringed road space between setting down didn't raise much notice.

I headed to the center of the city to find the Indiana Convention Center, the site of the upcoming Star Wars Celebration III. It wasn't hard to find—the place is huge. An array of skywalks connects it to a collection of hotels. And it's surrounded by restaurants, clubs, shops and other attractions, making the convention center somewhat of a nexus of activity. You know people from all over the world and all that.

I went in and checked out the place. The organization behind Star Wars Celebration III has got a lot of space to fill with pure Star Wars. They'll pull it off too—they've documented some way of compressing twenty-five years of the Force into three days.

Then I said, the place isn't just impressive looking, it's huge. With well over 340,000 square feet all indoors, there's going to be more to do, see, play, meet, buy, watch, learn, and drink over than anyone could actually have time to experience. And does this time around, the entire event will be held inside a single building, and be more like rocking Conquest than Dogfight, which me and my boots are all in favor of.

But the one thing I really picked up on is a big way is that I was only seeing a small piece of the whole deal. There's an enormous amount of plan-

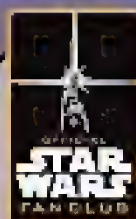
ning and schedule going on, and only a fraction of it's been rolled down to us. I know that's going to be updated on all the group sites, a number of places: www.starwars.com and www.starwarscelebration.com. I'll be checking up on those sites on a regular basis.

Anyway, I took an account of everything I was able to find out about so far, which I'll add to the next log.

Some People to Meet

Over thirty on-screen celebrities from all five movies will be available for autographs, photos, Q&A sessions and more. There will be lots of artists, authors, comic bookers, special effects folk, and even more actors.

Hundreds of members of the Fighting 501st Legion of Stormtroopers are planning to attend. If you're not familiar with them, check out their website: www.501st.com.



Fan Club Benefits

Special lanyard for your badge—this is your passport to the land of perks.

Early access to the Exhibit Hall & Star Wars Celebration III Store gives you a one-hour jump on celebrity signing events, merchandise, and tons of stuff you'll want first crack at.

Limited seating at select special events (like the opening ceremony and more) means you'll be able to see the things you'll really want to see, and hear the things you want to hear.

Fan Club members can relax in a private lounge in the convention center's spacious VIP room, which features several video monitors, and a concessions stand. In addition to the comforts of a members-only room, you'll find message boards here so you can make sure you don't miss meeting up with your pals.



Staying Nearby

Skywalks connect the convention center to seven of the closest hotels. How cool is that? You can book your rooms through the official Celebration web site.

Crowne Plaza Union Station (Skywalk/Adjacent)

Indianapolis Marriott (Skywalk/Across the street)

The Westin Indianapolis (Skywalk/Across the street)

Hyatt Regency Indianapolis (Skywalk/Across the street)

Courtyard by Marriott (Across the street)

Omni Severin (Skywalk/1 block)

The Canterbury Hotel (Skywalk/1 block)

Embassy Suites (Skywalk/2 blocks)

Adam's Mark Hotel & Suites Indianapolis (3 blocks)

Comfort Inn City Centre (3 blocks)

Check out www.iccrid.com for information about the Indiana Convention Center, nearby restaurants, and more.



Some Things to Watch

Multiple screening rooms will be set up to show a variety of DVD videos and more.

After making five feature-length films, you can imagine there's a lot of material floating around Lucasfilm. If you've got time to spare, you can see a seemingly inexhaustible number of trailers, "Making Of" segments, movie snippets, interviews and many other things—possibly even some never-before-seen film footage.

Some Things to Play

Although the *Attack of the Clones* box set hits shelves April 22nd, the official launch of the all-new Star Wars Trading Card Game (designed by Richard Garfield) will be here. There will be tons of opportunities, as well as tournaments.

Over thirty tables will be the site of continuous roleplaying games. The First Lucas Game! Association (FLPGA) will run multiple sessions of the popular living board campaign for the Star Wars Roleplaying Game. Open gaming space will also be available for all of you who won't want to let a weekend go by without rolling a few dice.

A wide variety of roleplaying Star Wars arcade games, as well as online and LAN computer games to help fill all your quarter-dropping, mouse-strafing needs. Tournaments for the PC-based games are planned throughout the weekend.

Some Things to Do

The art show will feature creations (you exhibit, and for sale) by artists who have done work on a wide range of Star Wars materials, from packaging and posters to storyboards and sets.

A huge contest will be held for those fans with skill and talent in the realm of costuming.

An entire room will be set aside for fans with a interest in collecting. Savvy collectors will be acquiring items at a collectors' Road Show. There will also be several collector's panels that will hold Q&A sessions, as well as talks on various subjects, such as advice on finding collectibles, caring for collectibles, and spotting counterfeit items.

Three days of nothing but Star Wars. I can imagine most people will have a hard time making up their mind on what to do.

I know I plan on spending most of the time just taking the ship double flying while I wait to my flight out when I want to go home I came back to May.

I'm definitely going to register early at www.starwarscelebration.com. I don't want to miss out. And, of course, I'll have to keep holding my item as more details of what's going on at Star Wars Celebration 2 gets passed to the Web.

It just add that it's going to be one jam-packed weekend and leave it at that. ☺

ON SALE NOW!

8



DIE JEDI! DIE! The New Jedi Order

Being Yuuzhan Vong

A campaign guide for players who just want to be extra-galactic invaders bent on total domination and mechanical annihilation.

Live at the Infidel

The adventure you've been waiting for ever since Vector Prime. Play the noble Yuuzhan Vong warriors assigned to hunt and kill the filthy jedai scum.

Endor and the Modell Sector

Visit the lovely forest moon, meet the indigenous population ... and run for your life before they trap and eat you!

Starship Combat Options

Think inside the box! Alternative starship and vehicle combat rules using a grid, just like character combat.

PLUS

- Sector Ranger prestige class
- Temporary skills guide
- Two System 2 stats packs for the Star Wars PCG



The Art of the Starfighter Exhibit

@The Children's Museum of Indianapolis

Focused on the model-making process used for the starships in Episode I, this traveling exhibit is a multimedia extravaganza that features a 35-foot-long scale model of one of the Naboo Starfighters used in the making of *The Phantom Menace*. The museum's about four miles away from the convention center, and worth the trip if you can tear yourself away. www.childrensmuseum.org



COMLINK

A Star Wars Summer, Part 2

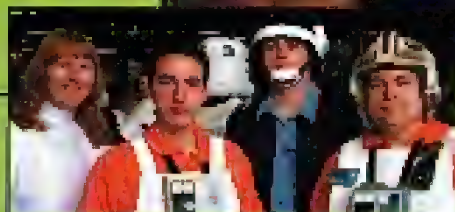
WIZARD WORLD

Chicago, IL, August 2001—Just outside of Chicago, the Rosemont Convention Center hosted Wizard World 2001. As you might expect from a show hosted by Wizard Press, this convention has a heavy focus on toys, card games, and comic books, and Star Wars is a favorite for fans of all three.

Star Wars actors were in abundance at Wizard World. Along the back wall of the dealer's room, you could find David Prowse (Darth Vader), Kenny Baker (R2-D2), Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca), Phil Brown (Uncle Owen), Michonne Bourlague (Aunty Sing), and model Shannon Baksa (Mara Jade). They were signing autographs, posing for pictures, and answering queries from their fans. "I have always said—and continue to say—that the Star Wars fans are some of the best people in the world," remarked Peter. "They are friendly and supportive and inquisitive about what is going on in the world of their favorite hobby." Among the fans in costume were Rebels, Imperials, and just about everything in between.

DRAGON*CON

Atlanta, GA, September 2001—Atlanta's Hyatt Regency and Marriott Marquis hotels were the place to be for this year's Dragon*Con convention. Of all of the summer conventions, Dragon*Con



might well have had the most for Star Wars fans.

A regional fan group called Matters of the Force prepared a track of Star Wars events that ran throughout all four days of the convention, including a Star Wars auction that raised thousands of dollars for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. In addition, the group organized a costume contest that had so many outstanding entries that the judges had to be creative just to find suitable ways to reward all of the great contestants. Fans could also attend celebrity panels, seminars on collecting, discussions on the art of Star Wars, and a roundtable for prequel speculation.

As usual, there were a plethora of Star Wars actors on hand. One could find Peter Mayhew, Richard LeParmentier (Admiral Morn), Jeremy Bulloch (Boba Fett), Michonne Bourlague, Shannon Baksa, Paul Blake (Greedo), David Prowse, and Garrick Hagon (Biggs). They all really enjoy interacting with the fans. Shannon Baksa summed up the feelings of the actors: "Star Wars fans are diverse, smart, friendly, personable, and very loyal. Very loyal! The memories I have from the last couple of years are wonderful."

Emcee for the entire convention was Anthony Daniels (C-3PO). "Dragon*Con is like a bright bea-

con in my life, every few years. I love being invited, mainly because the organizing committee is superb and the fans have such a wicked and gross sense of humor. Just like mine! I certainly tend to go out on a limb, but I drag the audiences along too and we all seem to have a blast. I think having an English accent allows me to get away with being a bit naughty."

You can read more of Anthony's comments about Dragon*Con at his newly revamped website, www.anthonydaniels.com.

Another highlight of the convention was the largest assemblage of the 501st stormtrooper division ever in one place. You couldn't turn around without seeing a stormtrooper, a biker scout, or some other Imperial uniform. Peter Mayhew was invited to a huge dinner with the entire assembled division, and had this to say: "It was one of the most awesome sights I had ever seen, with well over a hundred suited and armored attendees. My best memory was receiving a plaque from them and hearing them all yell 'Chewie! Chewie!' when I went up to receive it. It was a real rush of adrenaline."

And thus another convention season ends, filled with friends, great memories, cool collectibles, and more Star Wars than you can shake a lightsaber at.

NOT SO SILENT

Kevin Smith Narrates Star Wars Fan Documentary

Independent filmmaker Kevin Smith (*Clerk*, *Chasing Amy*, *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*) has made no secret of his love for Star Wars—his cover interview in *Star Wars Insider* #56 being just one of the many tip-offs. Now, Smith has added his voice and passion for the Skywalker saga to an independent documentary on Star Wars fans that was released by IndieDVD and Film Threat Video on October 16, the same day *The Phantom Menace* premiered on DVD.

One of many documentaries produced at the time of Episode I's release, *Starwoids* chronicles the rivalry between two groups of fans lining up outside two major movie theaters in Los Angeles—the pub-

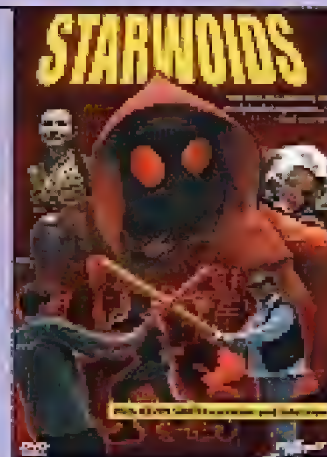
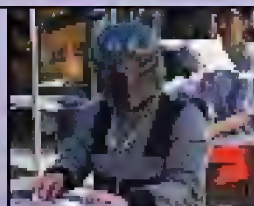
licity-drenched group who waited outside Hollywood's Chinese Theater, and the underdogs at Westwood's Village Theater. The film also features interviews with Star Wars fans, actors (like *A New Hope*'s Uncle Owen, Phil Brown), and cult heroes, as well as footage from 1999's inaugural Star Wars Celebration and an unforgettable high school musical inspired by Star Wars.

But getting Kevin Smith (also known as his onscreen alter-ego, Silent Bob) to contribute the opening narration and a bonus interview was a definite coup for the makers of *Starwoids*, which last year won the Best Documentary award at the NoDance Film Festival. Documentary

director Dennis Przywara said Smith was happy to help out.

"The people distributing the film are also distributing a Kevin Smith-produced film called *Drowning Flies*," Przywara told the *Insider*. "I said, 'He's a big fan—why don't you give him a tape and ask him if he'll do some narration for us?' They gave him a tape, and he said yes. Then we asked for an interview, and he said yes—one, because he's a Star Wars fan, and two, because he's a nice guy. He's a busy man and we will forever appreciate him."

For more information on *Starwoids*, check out the Web site at



www.starwoids.com, or www.indieDVD.com. Another Star Wars fan documentary, called *A Galaxy Far, Far Away* recently had a midnight run at a Los Angeles movie theater, the Sunset 5, and is currently seeking further distribution. You can read about that one at www.swdocumentary.com.

NEXT ISSUE:

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STAR WARS INSIDER

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"A nice and somewhat eager country boy," is how Australian actor Joel Edgerton decided to play Owen Lars in Episode II. Photo by Usa Tomasetti.



IN *STAR WARS: ATTACK OF THE CLONES*,

we get a glimpse of the young Owen Lars, introduced to the saga in 1977's *A New Hope* by actor Phil Brown as the jaded, gruff moisture farmer who runs his homestead with the same fiercely protective streak he feels for his nephew, Luke Skywalker. He didn't really need Luke to stay on the farm for "one more season," but he feared what would happen to his young charge if Luke left Tatooine for the Academy. After all, he knew what Luke didn't. He knew what happened to Luke's father.

For years, fans have wondered just how much Owen knew. What exactly did he see that made him so afraid that Luke would follow in his father's footsteps? How does he fit into the story of Anakin Skywalker? Until now, we haven't known how Owen and Beru came to raise Luke Skywalker and how one of them might be related to Luke's mother or father. In *Attack of the Clones*, at least that last question is answered, as we finally discover Owen Lars' connection to Anakin Skywalker.

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRYSIDE TO THE SANDS OF TATOOINE—
MEET THE LIFELONG *STAR WARS* FAN WHO GREW UP TO BECOME LUKE SKYWALKER'S
FUTURE UNCLE, OWEN LARS, IN *ATTACK OF THE CLONES*

LARS



BY SCOTT CHERNOFF

TRACKS



If these are puzzles that have preoccupied primarily hardcore *Star Wars* fans, then you can rest assured that Joel Edgerton, who plays the young Owen in *Attack of the Clones*, was one of those who had given the matter serious thought. The 27-year-old Australian actor has been a fan his whole life, and when the time comes to talk about *Star Wars*, he says quite matter-of-factly, "That's great, I'm pretty familiar with *Star Wars* Insider."

Speaking in detail for the first time about his approach to his character, Edgerton says, "Most people talk about Uncle Owen as this awful character because he's trying to stop Luke from fulfilling his dreams, that he was a bit of a dream-squasher. But I never thought of him like that. I always saw him as a father figure that was trying to act in Luke's best

interests. I related him to my own father, who was always telling me not to do stuff. I never saw him as being awful to me—I just thought he was showing me the way to live my life."

Now, in *Attack of the Clones*, the actor says, "When we find Owen as a young man, he obviously hasn't had too much experience in the way of what eventually happened with Anakin and Obi-Wan. I wanted to bring him back to a nice and somewhat eager country boy. He was probably curious about the world outside, and I think he's eager to understand and be told stories of places. There's a

"MOST PEOPLE TALK ABOUT UNCLE OWEN AS THIS AWFUL CHARACTER BECAUSE HE'S TRYING TO STOP LUKE FROM FULFILLING HIS DREAMS, BUT I NEVER THOUGHT OF HIM LIKE THAT. I ALWAYS SAW HIM AS A FATHER FIGURE THAT WAS TRYING TO ACT IN LUKE'S BEST



[above] Owen Lars (Joel Edgerton) and his girlfriend Beru Whitesun (Bonnie Prius) pay close attention to a disturbing tale in this scene from *Attack of the Clones*. >> The man who grows up to become Luke Skywalker's Uncle Owen comes face to face with harsh reality in Episode II. Photo by Lisa Tennant

certain naiveté, which then gives it somewhere to go toward in the later episodes.

"That was the greatest thing about Phil Brown's performance," he continues. "He really looked like he was well-lived-in. You can see into someone's eyes that's had a pretty interesting life, and you can guess as to what it is—and there's certainly

a lot of experience in that face of his. That's a good thing about going back to him as a young man: This is perhaps prior to any of that heavy experience. I'm sure he was a bit of a Luke himself—working away in this country town and wondering whether or not to go explore."

Playing Owen as a wide-eyed country boy isn't so far a stretch for Edgerton, who grew up in Dural, a small country town outside Sydney. An exchange program that took young Australians to Texas to put on plays got him interested in acting, leading him to start making trips to see plays in the big city and, eventually, to drama

school. Edgerton became one of the busiest actors on the Sydney stage, starring in Shakespeare and other prominent productions. He also stars with Guy Pearce (*Memento*) and Rachel Griffiths (*Hillary and Jackie*) in the upcoming film *Blood and Guts*, and he had a regular role on the Aussie TV series *The Secret Life of Us*, about eight singles sharing one apartment. "I played the country boy," he says.

Growing up in Dural, Edgerton became captivated by the *Star Wars* saga. "It was the first time I ever recall going to see a movie where I fully believed everything that was happening," he says, "even though it was an entirely bizarre, bent, other world. It was completely different [from] most movies, and that was the most exciting thing for me."

Recalls the actor, "I was a big Luke Skywalker fan, but it was all the creatures and monsters that really got me. The wilder the character, the more interesting it was for me. I love the bar scene, with Han Solo and the band playing. I wanted to own a Chewbacca—I saw him as a big, walking dog. If you live in the country, a dog's a good friend, and I saw Chewbacca as a big, shaggy dog. My favorite was *Return of the Jedi*, and I think that had a lot to do with the Ewoks. Maybe there's a recurring theme there with me and furry animals, but definitely when the Ewoks came in, that was a new flavor for me. I got right into the Ewoks."

Yet Edgerton was drawn to much more than little furballs and walking carpets. "Apart from how much of a visual adventure the whole thing is," he says, "it comes down to the human qualities in all the characters—

AS THIS AWFUL CHARACTER BECAUSE
SEEMS, THAT HE WAS A BIT OF A DREAM-SQUASHER.
OF HIM LIKE THAT."

—JOEL EDGERTON



[FOMO] Ben Solo (Dakka) is comforted by his father, Han Solo (Jack Thompson), while Leia Organa (Diana Lee Inosanto) watches the horizon. ✦ Ben and Leia have a hard-core life on Tatooine, but there's always the comfort of the Homefront. Photo by Lisa Tomasetti.

trust and loyalty and ambition. If a story has those things in it and remains true to them, an audience will watch. The whole family aspect of *Star Wars*—fighting and reconciling with a father—it's stuff of Shakespearean size.

"What really caught me about the *Star Wars* trilogy was the whole relationship between Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia. I always had a huge crush on her, and the thing that always fascinated me was this brother and sister, and the not knowing, and the love that existed there, and the awkwardness of it, of what form of love it is. There are different points where, as an audience member, you might sense it before they do. I found that even more interesting than the dynamic between Luke and Vader. Plus, the idea of having a sister was cool—I would have liked a sister to kick around with."

He does have a brother, Nash, a stunt performer as well as a filmmaker whose short films have won awards at Australian film festivals. The brothers collaborated on a short called *Bloodlock* (Nash directed, Joel produced and starred) that they plan to turn into a feature film. Nash was also Joel's stunt double on the film *Blood and Guts*. "He did a jump onto a train roof for me," Joel says. "He's been a stuntman for 10 years, but this is the first time he's been my stunt double. He's got a photo album of himself next to people he's doubled, and I'd never figured in there until now."

One actor who preceded Joel into his brother's photo album was Ewan McGregor.

Nash was Obi-Wan Kenobi's stunt double on *Attack of the Clones*, which means both Edgerton brothers appear in the new *Star Wars* movie. But Joel's journey to the *Star Wars* universe was the result of not just his talent, training, and familiarity with the character. Some of it was up to fate—like Lucasfilm bringing the production to Sydney, and of course, his striking physical resemblance to the older Owen, Phil Brown.

"The chubby cheeks, the almond-shaped eyes, a round head—physically, I could use Phil Brown as a guide to what I'll look like when I'm in my mid-50s," Edgerton says. "I'm like a mini-Phil Brown."

His Owenesque look caught the eye of prequel casting director Robin Gurland, who was looking at local Sydney actors and discovered Edgerton's headshot, complete with all the impressive stage credits along with it. She called him in for a meeting. "I didn't go too



**"APART FROM HOW MUCH OF A VISUAL
IT COMES DOWN TO THE HUMAN QUALITIES IN ALL THE STORIES.
IF A STORY HAS THOSE THINGS IN IT, IT'S GOING TO BE AN AUDIENCE
MAGNET."**



overboard to try and emulate Phil Brown at the audition," he says, "but I watched the beginning of *Star Wars* quite a few times and just allowed that to simmer in my head."

For his audition, Joel was asked to read Owen's dialogue, but not from *Attack of the Clones*. Instead, he found himself reading the words of Uncle Owen from *A New Hope*. "We got some pages from the original *Star Wars*, of the scene with Luke and Owen, where Owen's telling him, 'I need you here,' Robin was reading for Luke, and I was reading for Owen."

But after going through the scene, Edgerton asked the casting director if they could switch characters. "Because of the nature of the scene, and knowing that I'd be playing Owen as a young man, I asked if we could swap the roles so I could read Luke's words," he says. "It seemed a more appropriate way of getting into a young man's headspace, so that I felt more like a young man speaking to an authority figure. That helped a lot."

His reading won him the part, news Edgerton received on his 26th birthday. "Made my day," he says, "and my year."

Once he got the go-ahead to play the young Owen, Edgerton worked hard to make the character believable as a younger version of the world-weary figure we've known from *A New Hope*. "After I got the role, my friend

L ADVENTURE THE WHOLE THING IS.
E CHARACTERS—TRUST AND LOYALTY AND AMBITION.
IT AND REMAINS TRUE TO THEM.
WILL WATCH."

—JOEL EDGERTON

JOEL EDGERTON
OWEN LARS

Adam, who's a real *Star Wars* fan and also owns a CD burner, somehow managed to transfer the audio of all of Phil's words on to a CD, without any of the other stuff," he says. With a pair of headphones, "I would walk around in my day and get the rhythm of his speech in my head."

Still, it's one thing to repeat Phil Brown's words over and over, but quite another to master his inflections on words you've never heard him speak. "It's easy to mimic somebody," Edgerton explains. "It's not necessarily too easy to mimic somebody using different dialogue. You really have to feel like you've got the impression down. A challenge was nailing the accent. There was something I noticed where occasionally he'd stress unusual words. There was a certain melody to his voice that I tried to get, where certain words would hit certain notes. I tried my hardest to get that."

Edgerton found it easier to capture the way Owen moved in *A New Hope*. "Once I had all the latest fashions of Tatooine on me, walking in the Tunisian desert, I realized that so much of what he was doing physically maybe wasn't his choice in how to play the character, but just purely practical things to do with the costume," the actor says. "He had his hands on his hips a lot, and the sleeves are very long, and the material is quite heavy and cumbersome, so it almost needs a certain posture and a certain lift of the hands just to keep your hands free."

Indeed, by the time he donned a Tatooine tonic, his transformation was complete. Joel Edgerton had evolved into Owen Lars. His first day on the set, the actor met Anthony Daniels, who plays C-3PO and worked with Phil Brown on *A New Hope*. "When I first met him on the set, he was in costume, and I had a little conversation

Australian actor Joel Edgerton takes on the role of Owen Lars in *Episode II*. Photo by Sue Adles.



with him which was great," Edgerton recalls. "We exchanged a bit of dialogue from the scene when Owen buys C-3PO from the Jawas. It was exciting to see him, and milling around in the background was R2-D2."

Even more exciting was the next day, because Edgerton only worked one day at Fox Studios Australia before the production packed up for shooting in Tunisia, including the original Lars homestead locations from *A New Hope*.

"That was singularly the most exciting and the most bizarre moment in the whole shoot for me," he says. "Arriving at the same location of the homestead was really weird—quite similar to when I studied Greek history in school and suddenly I was at those places when my family took me there."

Edgerton was so caught up in the moment that he seemed to forget he wasn't really on the desert planet. "I've worked a lot," he says sheepishly, "and I



know how film sets are broken up—for instance, the exterior location for the homestead had an entrance and a big crater dug in the ground, but it doesn't travel down to the underground homestead like in the movie—that location is a two-and-a-half hour drive away, in another part of Tunisia. But it's almost like I suddenly forgot all I know about the way movies are made. I just ran over there thinking, 'I'll look down, and I'll see all that stuff.' Of course, it wasn't there—we did that stuff a few days later. But I felt like it was all there."

Claiming the original Lars homestead in Tunisia as his own was "the highlight for me," Edgerton says. "Seeing the vaporators—it was thoroughly detailed. There were immediately about 12 people I wished were there with me."

Going from the Australian countryside to the far reaches of the *Star Wars* galaxy turned out to be such a fantastic dream come true

for the actor that there are times he thinks it was just that—a dream. "It's still a weird thought for me, even being in the middle of Africa and shooting it," he says. "It was an odd feeling, knowing I'd grown up watching these movies and knowing they are such a huge part of film history and literally created their own parallel universe in the minds of so many people in the world. And there I was playing Luke Skywalker's uncle. How did it all come about?"

That's one question that's easy to answer—Joel Edgerton is playing Owen Lars because his talent, experience, and look make him the best person for the part, hands down. As for the questions of what Owen is like as a young man and how he comes to raise Anakin Skywalker's son, we'll soon have *Attack of the Clones* to continue showing us exactly how it all came about. 🌌

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. According to a devious Artoo-Deetoo in *Star Wars: A New Hope*, what device prevented him from playing Princess Leia's message in its entirety?
2. My resumé includes a stint as a binary load lifter programmer. Who am I?
3. What dialect did See-Threepio describe as "like a second language to me"?
4. What aliens were described by See-Threepio in *A New Hope* as "disgusting creatures"?

Bonnie Plesse

After *Attack of the Clones*,
you won't think of Beru Whitesun the same way again.

First of all, you might think of her as, well, Beru Whitesun—and not only as Aunt Beru, the motherly caretaker with soulful eyes played so memorably by the late British actress Shelagh Fraser in the original *Star Wars*. Now, fans can also picture Beru as Bonnie Plesse, a

talented teenage actress who plays guitar, just graduated from high school, and recently appeared on the Australian television show *Blue Heelers* playing, as she put it, “a crazy witch dancing around a bonfire half-naked—which was fun.”

In fact, the new Beru is brought to life by a free-spirited, artistic 18-year-old who, unlike the Beru who's settled down on the moisture farm, longs to spend her days after high school graduation “travelling, playing music, and acting—and just being free from school for a while!”

When the *Insider* talked to Plesse (pronounced *peace*), she was on the verge of finishing school in her home town of Melbourne, Australia. “I’ve just got about six weeks before I finish all my exams,” she said, “and then I’m going to celebrate and do as much work as I possibly can. I’ve really wanted to go out and work more, but I know I have to finish school.” As for college, she said, “I definitely want to keep learning. I might go back to uni, but at the moment, I think I just need to travel and be free.”

But while the actress who plays her may be young and restless, fans can rest assured that the teenage Beru is just as low-key as ever—if not more so.



micro B

Star Wars Insider chats with the spirited teen actress who plays Beru years before she ever poured Luke Skywalker his first drop of blue milk



eru

by scott chernoff

Beru Whitesun

Bonnie Piesse

"I think you'll find the young Beru is a bit more shy than in Episode IV, because I felt like maybe she hadn't quite come out of her shell yet," Piesse said. "I feel like Beru hasn't quite found herself. She's still very young. She's got the genuine kindness and love that the older Beru does, but she hasn't really settled down yet. I would say that when Luke comes to live with them, she becomes a mother and really becomes content in the desert. I think the introduction of Luke into her life probably made her a lot more mature, because she had to grow up and look after this child."

But while the actress has clearly done a lot of thinking about her character, she did her homework on the fly.

Piesse had barely

seen *Star Wars* when she was asked to try out for Episode II.

"I hadn't seen any of the *Star Wars* episodes apart from Episode I before I found out about the audition—and then I madly tried to learn about the films," she said. "I got them all and watched them with my family. I loved them, maybe because of the excitement of the fact that I might be involved in it. But my family loves *Star Wars* anyway, so I fed on their adrenaline and I love the movies now. They've got so much detail—I never realized. I'm still trying to learn all the characters."

Bonnie was 17, with a few television credits under her belt, when she first got the call from casting director Robin Gurland's office. "It's still kind of a mystery to me," she said, "but I think they found out about me off an actor's database on the Internet. They must have been matching faces, and I fit Beru's face." She auditioned by reading Beru's lines from *A New Hope*, so it's a good thing she rented the movie before the big day.

"I probably watched the whole film four or five times, and then the part with Beru—I don't know how many times I watched it, but a lot," she said. "I loved the character. She was very warm and had a really loving look in her eye. I tried to carry that through. I was so happy



Photo by also romasetti



[ABOVE] Bonnie Piesse admires the warmth and kindness in Shelagh Fraser's portrayal of Beru.

[RIGHT] One of Bonnie Piesse's creative outlets is vegetarian cooking, so she felt right at home in the Lars kitchen.

"I feel like Beru hasn't quite found herself. She's still very young. She's got the genuine kindness and love that the older Beru does, but she hasn't really settled down yet."

—Bonnie Piesse

because Beru's such a beautiful, genuinely kind woman. Recently, I've been playing a few nasty characters, so it's nice to be able to play a nice character."

Among those nasty characters are the aforementioned half-naked witch, as well as a cop's daughter gone bad on the local TV series *Spingers*, and the lead in the independent film *Composite Creatures*.

But like Beru, Piesse's first and most famous role was a good girl: At 15, she was a regular on the Down Under kids' series *High Flyers*. "It was about circus kids out in the Aussie bush," she said. "I was the trapezist."

Playing a performer was a fitting first professional role for a girl who had been creative her whole life. "I've always been interested in the performing arts, and I don't quite know where it came from," she said. "No one else in my family is really interested in it. I do have a fairly musical family, but I'm the one who pursued it. I started to write songs when I was 14, but I've always been singing something. It's in my blood."

Bonnie attended an alternative school where she was trained on violin, but these days she's more into playing guitar and singing the



Beru Whitesun

Bonnie Piesse

songs she described as "contemporary folk—sort of folksy, with a bit of rock." Music was her main thing before she discovered acting, but now she thinks of them, "probably equally. Acting is something that you go out and do with a lot of people, and for me music is a more introverted thing. I play more for myself. But I'm going to try to start playing more gigs and get a CD made."

The young star is most happy when she's doing something artistic. "Music takes up a lot of my time, but I love writing as well," she said. "I've been writing a film, and I write short stories and poems."

[ABOVE] Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) shares a meal with his Aunt Beru (Shelagh Fraser) in the homestead kitchen in *A New Hope*.

[BELOW] Director George Lucas and actress Bonnie Piesse closely examine a Tatooine snack in the kitchen nearly 25 years later. Photo by Lisa Fowles/ETL.



I just had to get it into my head to do the work and not look around — because it wasn't meant to be an amusement park. I wasn't a visitor.

—Bonnie Plesse

I also like cooking—one of my passions is vegetarian cooking. I do a lot of creating!”

Whether it's playing a part, writing a song, or whipping up a dish, Plesse said it's all about “expression—it's all a way of expressing myself. I love the fact that with acting, you can be all these other characters who you probably could have been—you explore different characters that are within you.”

While she's found the most success as an actor, Plesse might never have taken up the craft if it hadn't been for a friend who did it first. “I

never thought it was possible to be an actress until a few years ago,” she said. “I'd never known any actors, so it just seemed totally out of reach. Then one of my friends got an acting agent, and she said she'd been doing all this work and it was fun and maybe I should join.”

Bonnie, then 13, signed up with the same agency. “It took me about two years to start getting work,” she recalled. “I was just auditioning and taking courses, learn-

ing how to act.” Then came *High Flyers*—not only her first part, but also her first time away from home. “It was fun—we had a six-month shoot, so I was away from school for six months,” she said. “It was a great learning experience, because I had never done any professional acting work before. It taught me a lot.”

That's an understatement. As a circus performer—a trapeze artist, no less—Plesse had to learn quite a bit. “They gave us four weeks training,” she said. “It was pretty challenging, because they'd be asking us to do four-minute handstands, which is pretty hard. But I'm quite gym-

nastic—I used to do spring board diving, so that taught me to do flips and stretches. They taught us juggling as well.” Still, as daunting as those challenges were, joining the *Star Wars* cast was an even greater leap. “For me, coming from a little circus kids show and guest roles on series,” she said, “it was extremely overwhelming. All the other sets I've been on were little—here, there were cameras everywhere. It was exciting, but at the same time it was distracting. I just had to get it into my head to do the work and not look around—because it wasn't meant to be an amusement park. I wasn't a visitor. I had to pull myself together and do the work.”

Her first-day jitters wore off. “By a few days into the Tunisia shoot, I started to really relax and enjoy it, and get to know the people—and that was when I started to have a lot of fun.”

She bonded most closely with her onscreen beau, Joel Edgerton, who plays her future husband, Owen Lars. “Joel and I became really good friends over the three-and-a-half-weeks that we were away,” she said. “I was really thankful to have him there, because he's been in the industry longer than I have. He helped me through and looked after me.”

Yet although she'd watched *A New Hope* over and over, Bonnie didn't pick up on Edgerton's strong resemblance to the older Uncle Owen until after shooting was over. “I didn't really see it,” she said, “until I watched Episode IV the other day, and then suddenly I thought, ‘Whoa, that's Joel!’ It's kind of weird—it's like looking into the future.”

The feeling was similar when filming on the same sites where the original Beru toiled in Tunisia a quarter-century ago. “Being out on the original set was great,” she said. “I took a few snapshots of myself in front of the homestead. It was like I suddenly stepped into the movie. I feel like I flew to a cloud, and then came back after three-and-a-half weeks.” Of course, Bonnie Plesse really did step into *Star Wars*—and while the actress may have returned from her cloud, the character of Beru Whitesun will bear her visage for a long time to come. ☺



BILLY DEE

W An



TALKING WITH THE REAL LIFE
LANDO CALRISSIAN

Williams

ECLECTIC career

In a career spanning decades,

Billy Dee Williams has just about done it all: movies, theater, TV, painting, writing. And like Lando Calrissian, the character he brought to life in *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, he's always willing to try something new.

Star Wars Insider caught up with Williams in August 2001 at the Gen Con Game Fair, the annual gaming, science fiction, and fantasy convention held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

card player,
gambler, scoundrel.
YOU'D LIKE HIM.

What makes Lando so popular? Williams jokes, "His good looks, certainly. He's me. It's clear and simple."

More seriously: "He's charming and a *bon vivant*. He's a man who's devoid of all the clichés, a man of the future. The Lando character was good because you weren't sure which way he was going to go. That's always good when you write a character. There's a little bit of uncertainty that you can attribute to a kind of villain. The [ambiguity] makes it much more interesting.

"I think one of the successes of the character is that it was someone everyone could relate to. He was a character who certainly was eclectic.



BY Helen Keier
WITH Allen Varney

BILLY DEE WILLIAMS

AN ECLECTIC CAREER

"My acting career really took off when I played Lando Calrissian in the *Star Wars* movies. They gave me a huge fan base that will never go away, because those films have a kind of screen immortality. I'd get into these big discussions about me betraying Han Solo—not only [with] the kids but [also] airline stewardesses."

"I've been pretty fortunate," Williams says. "The industry . . . can chew you up and spit you out, but if you have a fan base, [then you have it all]."

WE GO BACK A LONG WAY, LANDO AND ME.

William December Williams was born in Harlem, in April 1938, to a Texan father and a West Indian mother. His parents worked several jobs while his maternal grandmother helped raise Williams and his twin sister, Loretta. The family encouraged Billy Dee's artistic develop-

ment in *A Taste of Honey* (Best Foreign Play of 1961, New York Drama Critics). After the failure of two marriages, Williams battled depression during the 1960s, but he returned strongly as Chicago Bears football player Gale Sayers in the acclaimed 1971 TV movie *Brian's Song*, opposite James Caan. The film "was an act of love," he says. "It was very special."

Starring roles followed, such as *Bingo Long's Travelling All-Stars and Motor Circus* (1975, with future *Star Wars* co-star James Earl Jones), then *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983), *Night Hawks* (1981) with Sylvester Stallone, extensive TV and stage work, and the role of District Attorney Harvey Dent in *Batman* (1987). Williams enjoyed playing Dent but regrets that he did not have the opportunity to play the character when he evolved into the villain Two-Face. However, he is gracious in accepting this disappointment.



ment; his mother, an elevator operator in a Broadway theater, got him his first stage job at age 7, as a boy soprano in the Kurt Weill operetta *The Firebrand of Florence*.

Billy Dee's main interest, however, was painting. He won a scholarship to the National Academy of Fine Arts and Design in New York, where he studied classical portrait painting. He went into acting to earn money for art supplies, but theater drew him in, and he attended the prestigious New York City High School of the Performing Arts, the school that inspired the movie and TV show *Fame*.

Trained in the Stanislavsky method of acting, Williams debuted onscreen in *The Lost Angry Man* (1960) and achieved recognition onstage

THE BILLY DEE WILLIAMS
WORLD ART GALLERY

When he returned to New York to star in the 1965 Broadway hit *Fences*, Billy Dee Williams renewed his friendship with Peter Max, the leading pop artist of the 1960s. This in turn renewed Williams' interest in his first career; painting. In two years he painted 120 works.

"I really got caught up in my painting, that became a real priority. I needed to find out some things about myself. I've lived with this notion that I'm a brilliant person, you see, and I had to find out if it was really true. I'm not quite sure that I'm so brilliant, but I think I'm going in that direction."

His work is displayed in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian's National Portrait

Even before these popular roles, it was his early star turns opposite Diana Ross in *Lady Sing the Blues* (1972) and *Mahogany* (1975) that defined Williams's enduring image as a sex symbol: suave, poised, with romance in his eyes and mischief in his heart.

YOU TRULY BELONG HERE WITH US AMONG THE CLOUDS.

Even with the obvious competition of scoundrel Han Solo, Lando Calrissian is the character known for his charms. "I've had this reputation of being a ladies' man for a long time now," Williams says. "I guess there is a certain sound in my voice, and a special way I carry myself."

Despite the lasting reputation, Williams rejects the notion that he plays the same sort of character in each movie. "If you look at all the

characters that I have done, even though they all seem to have a romantic edge to them, they were still good characters, and they weren't always the same. People may not have realized it, but when I did *Brian's Song* and *Lady Sing the Blues*, that was all in the same year—in fact, only months apart. In those two films you see the difference in the two characters, but I was still the same age. I was designated the sex symbol, so that has stuck in people's minds."

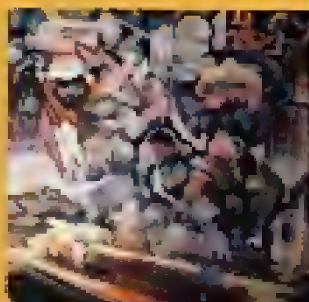
Being known as the ladies' man hasn't hurt him, though. Williams has a philosophical approach to his public persona. "I've done very well with that image. It's made me a very good living, but on a certain level



Gaffery and the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The National Air and Space Museum has exhibited his series honoring the Tuskegee Army, the African-American pilots whose exploits changed American military history. Currently Williams is exhibiting in Tokyo and Toronto.

"I call my paintings 'Abstract Reality.' Sometimes I refer to them as 'Impressions/Expression.' It's the best way I can explain them." His work, mainly in acrylic, emphasizes a vibrant palette, wide-ranging subjects, and onemantic, occasionally hectic compositions. On his Web site (www.bdw.worldart.com), Williams cites as influences Edward Inopier, Escher, the Dutch masters, Frida Kahlo, Tamara de Lempicka, Thomas Hart Benton, and African art.

The site offers lithographs of Williams' collage *Contra Collision, Into the Future* (unsigned, \$85; signed, \$125).



I try not to take it too seriously. I got it, and I can't get rid of it, so I might as well have fun with it."

He poked fun at the image in last year's comedy *The Ladies Man*, as Lester the bartender, mentor to the title character. "They were looking for a Billy Dee Williams-type, and someone said why don't they just get me? So they asked, and I did it. I really like [comedy]."

At the same time, Williams feels secure about his image because he appreciates the success it has brought him and, more importantly, because he's earned it as a film pioneer. "I was the first black man

I THINK WE NEED TO GET AWAY FROM DIFFERENCES AND REALLY START LOOKING AT THE WORLD AS AN AMALGAMATION OF IDEAS AND ENERGIES.

BILLY DEE WILLIAMS

AN ECLECTIC CAREER

on the screen to become a romantic matinee idol in a major way. I was able to get by all the censors, so to speak, and create an impact with this whole romantic thing. What other man of my color was ever on the screen and succeeded on that level? It never happened before."

I'M SORRY I COULDN'T DO BETTER, BUT I HAVE MY OWN PROBLEMS.

Williams frequently observes that his career has been limited by the roles he was offered, and that the biggest stumbling block in his career has been racism. "When you're a good-looking, intelligent guy, and you happen to [have] brown skin, that becomes a major threat to a lot of people.

"I see a lot of the young African-American actors doing things I wanted to do years ago but couldn't do because of the bigotry. We're still

BY BILLY DEE WILLIAMS

In June 1999 Tor Books published *PolNet*, a science-fiction novel by Billy Dee Williams and Rob MacGregor. The sequel, *Jurgen Time*, followed in August 2000. Based on a 1995 Central Intelligence Agency report admitting defense research on extrasensory perception, the novels follow the struggle of Major Trent Calloway, a retired operative known as a remote viewer—a psychic spy.

MacGregor has written 17 books, including the novelization of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* and six other *Indiana Jones* novels. "Billy was great to work with," he says. "He really is an excellent coauthor. The process was smooth and worked really nice."

Williams briefly did TV infomercials for the



fighting the old battles, the old wars and, you know, one would think we're past that. But we're not. I guess it's about getting to people's insecurities, the people who are afraid to deal with other cultures."

Williams has his own vision for escaping racism. "We need to be a lot more eclectic in our way of living and in the way we look at things. I think we need to get away from differences and really start looking at the world as an amalgamation of ideas and energies. The sooner we get off this issue, this question of 'the black experience,' then you really start having an experience."

Not one to lead from the rear, Williams continues to pursue roles that defy stereotypes. "I did a movie called *The Visit*, which received

four IFF [Independent Feature Production/West] Independent Spirit Award nominations, and just glowing reviews from everybody. It's one of the best experiences in all the years I've been doing this. It is so real. If I talk long enough about it, I get very emotional."

The Visit (2001), an independent film from newcomer writer/director/producer/editor Jordan Walker-Pearlman, tells the moving story of a prison inmate dying of AIDS who attempts to make peace with his family. Williams portrays the dying man's difficult yet very human father. The performance earned him Best Supporting Actor nominations at the IFF/West and NAACP Image Awards, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Multicultural Motion Picture Association.

Psychic Readers Network in 1996, and he remains interested in psychic phenomena. "I find that when I relax and close my eyes, I start getting pictures of places that seem quite real. Not only do I get the pictures, but I find myself walking through these places. But it scares me to explore them, because the places have a kind of sepia tone to them, and I keep wondering if I'm about to see something that I really don't think I can handle."

Discussions for a third novel featuring Calloway are underway, but no details are set. Now Williams is branching into other genres. With Elizabeth Atkins Bowman, a writer known for confronting racial issues in her work, Williams will soon publish *Twilight*, a romance novel with serious overtones. The novel "addresses a lot of ideas I have about what I call the gray area." It expresses the full spectrum of colors.

psi/NET

1999

JUST/IN TIME

2000

TWILIGHT

in progress

bridging these differences, life becomes more fun." Williams is married again; his wife is Japanese.

Still, he prefers to lead by example rather than by evangelism. "I think I've been [a mentor] by virtue of my race. I'm not one to go around preaching to people. I don't have time for that."

YEAH, I'M RESPONSIBLE THESE DAYS. IT'S THE PRICE YOU PAY FOR BEING SUCCESSFUL.

Williams recognizes the value his name can bring to a worthy cause. He's Honorary Co-Chair (with Bill Cosby) of the Thelonious Monk Institute in Washington, DC, a



"It transcends the whole question of ethnicity. I've never seen that with black people in film before, not on this level. It really is a psychological journey, and we rarely get to see people from this ethnic background dealt with in this way."

Change in the film industry, and in society, is "going to happen anyway. That's starting to happen in a lot of ways, [but] certainly not to my satisfaction. But then again, I think I'm way ahead of a lot of people in my ideas.

"I've led a very eclectic life. I live in the gray area. I see myself as a 'full-spectrum' color. I love mixture. I come from a family with a lot of mixture. We had all kinds of people in our home. Once you start

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Lando Calrissian was originally conceived as a clone of whom?
2. While being choked by Chewbacca, where did Lando Calrissian indicate the Rebels still had a chance to save Han?
3. In *Return of the Jedi*, what battle does Lando Calrissian boast about aboard the Rebellion's Headquarters Frigate?

I THINK I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN REALLY PLAY ELLINGTON. I UNDERSTAND HIS KIND OF ELEGANCE, WHICH WAS A FOPPISSH KIND OF SUAVE ELEGANCE.

BILLY DEE WILLIAMS

AN ECLECTIC CAREER

charity that funds young jazz musicians. He says that the institute "affords a lot of young people the opportunity to express themselves. Creativity is necessary for children. Without guidance, they become little monsters," he laughs. Each year, Williams contributes the artwork for the cover of the Thelonious Monk Institute's competition souvenir program.

Recently he has participated in benefits for the American Cancer Society. "Minority communities in America experience many cancers at disproportionately higher rates," he says, "and their survival rates are often significantly lower than in the general population. Cancer among minorities is a subversive killer because of underreporting of the problem in the media, inadequate and sometimes differential access to treatment, and even denial among those most affected," he says.

"My father died of leukemia in 1973. I watched him go out, brave

series at www.urbanentertainment.com, Williams plays a presidential candidate who surprisingly announces he's abandoning his campaign to sell fried chicken.

Williams chooses roles that let him express his own creativity. And more important, "I look for a good story. I think that's most important. And characters people can relate to." He's looking forward to working in an upcoming film tentatively titled *Zen*. Scheduled for shooting in China in fall 2001, *Zen* is a live-action feature including digital effects, along the lines of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

Williams still works in television, most recently in *18 Wheels of Justice* and a fine recurring role on the cable series *Gideon's Crossing* as a father dying of cancer. "That was really a wonderful character to get into. He's charming, but he's a rascal. I had a lot of fun."



and uncomplaining, but he was only 63. All three of my uncles and one of my aunts also died of cancer." Consequently, Williams takes meticulous care of his own health, exercising, eating right, and getting regular screenings for cancer.

THINGS HAVE DEVELOPED THAT WILL INSURE SECURITY.

Billy Dee Williams's schedule is quite full at the moment. He appears next in *Undercover Brother*, a feature directed by Malcolm Lee (*The Best Man*) and produced by Ron Howard's Imagine Entertainment. In this *Austin Powers*-style spy spoof, based on John Ridley's online animated

His longtime dream is to make a biographical film of the life of jazz great Duke Ellington. "For years I've been trying to get that project off the ground. It's very difficult. I've spent a lot of time researching and put an idea together years ago. I think I'm the only one who can really play Ellington. I understand his kind of elegance, which was a foppish kind of suave elegance. That's what I am. Foppishly elegant.

"Getting older is difficult for me only because I never see myself as an older person. I perpetually see myself as a stupid, young person, walking around and getting into trouble. [Nowadays] I am much more willing to take risks. I don't think I have to prove anything to anyone any more. The older I get, the more I find I am willing to embrace it all." 🍌

ART OF THE

STAR WARS

TRADING CARD GAME

**NEW *STAR WARS* TCG FEATURES
EPISODE II IMAGERY**

by Michael G. Ryan

It's great to work with a partner
who knows exactly what they need
from us; **it's much easier
than taking shots in
the dark!**

—**Sean Glenn**, *Wizards of the Coast* Star Wars Brand Art Director



Wizards of the Coast has won the exclusive world-wide license to publish a trading-card game (TCG) based on the Star Wars movies and Expanded Universe. That means fans can look forward to a game designed by Richard Garfield, creator of *Magic: The Gathering*, the game that began the entire trading card game phenomenon.

STAR WARS

TRADING CARD GAME

At a minimum, we'd like 60 to 70 percent of the cards to be scenes from the film—scenes the fans will instantly recognize.

—Sean Glenn



Studio shots such as this one of Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker) are taken against a gray background. More exciting backgrounds are later added. photo by Sue Adler

The new game arrives in April 2002, shortly before the release of *Attack of the Clones* and features scenes from the film. Look for a complete introduction and comprehensive card list to appear in *Star Wars Gamer* #10, which hits newsstands starting May 7. Until then, the *Insider* has a sneak preview of the amazing art that will grace hundreds of new cards this spring.

CARD-BY-CARD

Star Wars Brand Art Director Sean Glenn has his hands full when, early in the process of determining images for the cards and the packaging, the first wave of photos from *Attack of the Clones* arrives at Wizards of the Coast from Lucasfilm. Glenn is already overseeing the art for all the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* sourcebooks, and for

months, he's been talking about images for the new trading card game with Lucasfilm. Those discussions have transitioned smoothly from visits to Skywalker Ranch to creating a list of images Wizards would like to use as the card set takes shape. Up to this point, however, Glenn's been using placeholder material on many of the cards while the folks at Lucasfilm go through their computerized catalog in search of specific images for the new game, which pits player against player in three different arenas of combat as they battle to control two of the three. Now that the package has arrived with hundreds of character shots, props, and scenes from the film, Glenn's monumental task is to go through them, select the ones that work best on the cards, and then color-correct and crop those pieces one at a time. Some images will appear in a widescreen format; others will appear

CARD NAME

The name of the character, ground unit, or starship this card represents. Some characters have more than one card, each with different abilities.

BUILD COST

This is how much it costs to put this card in play at the beginning of the game and every turn players get build points to spend on putting new cards into play.

KEYWORDS

This shows what type of card this is (Anakin is a character), as well as any other important information (he is also a Jedi).

ALIGNMENT

Cards can be either Light Side, Dark Side, or Neutral. Anakin is a Light Side card.

CARD TEXT

This lists what the card can do when in play. Below the rules text, some cards have flavor text that has no game effect.

COLOR

Each different kind of card has a different color.

SPACE GROUND CHARACTER MECHS COMBAT

SPEED

In battle, speed determines the order cards attack in. The highest speed attacks first, followed by the next highest, and so on.

POWER

When a card attacks roll this many dice. Each die result of 4, 5, or 6 is a hit.

HEALTH

A card hit this many times must be discarded from play. Counters placed on the card keep track of hits.

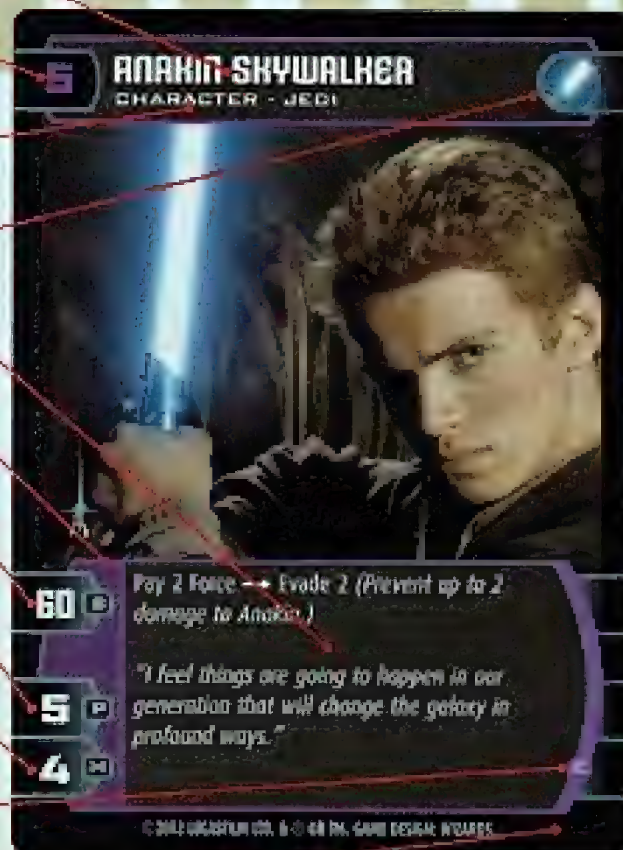
UNIQUE INDICATOR

If a card represents someone or something unique, each different version will have a different letter here. This is version "C" of Anakin Skywalker.

CARD NUMBER/RARITY SYMBOL

The card number shows what number this is and how many cards are in the whole set.

The rarity symbol shows that the card is either rare (R), uncommon (U), or common (C). (The card pictured here is an unnumbered promo card.)



more square-shaped. It's up to Glenn to decide card-by-card how every image appears.

"There are many, many great pieces," he says after examining the first wave. "One of my favorites is a shot of the freighter landing platform on Coruscant, and there are several fantastic shots of the battle between Obi-Wan and Jango Fett. The detail in the landing platform shot is great. There's luggage, passengers, the Coruscant skyline, all kinds of stuff, not to mention the over-the-top massive scale of the entire thing."

In addition to the images that arrive from Lucasfilm needing only cropping and color-correction, Glenn expects he'll need to create a wide range of composites—that is, images pieced together from multiple sources. Snip a background from one photo, a character from another, and create a new third image by combining the pair digitally. Other images will need to be altered or enhanced in other ways. "Say there are a bunch of characters in a scene and we want to concentrate on just one," he explains. "We may zoom in, enlarge that character, diminish what's around it so that the single character comes to the front."

Then there are those studio shots that, while technically perfect and focused on the precise subject Glenn might need, require more

exciting backgrounds. "Isolating characters from their existing backgrounds is what takes the most time," he admits. "You have a studio shot of the characters, a great dynamic pose, perfect lighting . . . but they're on this gray photo backdrop. So, we send that shot off to our digitech team, and they color-correct pieces against one another and isolate the characters so we can put them into different backgrounds."

Furthermore, some pieces must be generated completely from scratch, a much more complicated process. "We'll hire a computer animation artist to create a new ship or a ship that's only been glimpsed for a second, one that we don't have a high-quality shot for," Glenn says. This particular process requires the Wizards team to determine which original imagery they want—a TIE fighter that's been described only in one of the books, for instance—and then send a written reference to a digital illustrator. The illustrator then builds a model of the ship, and a flat shaded version of that model is sent to Wizards for approvals. Wizards makes their comments, then sends the model on to Lucasfilm for final approval, and any changes that must be made pass back and forth between the two companies and the artist. "It's actually a very smooth process," Glenn says. "Most of the time, we're working with images that already exist in some manner, but even

STAR WARS



Star Wars Brand Art Director Sean Glenn (left) and Star Wars Brand Graphic Designer Rick Achberger (right) pose alongside months' worth of design concepts for the Star Wars TCG. photo by Craig Cudnofsky

when they don't, Lucasfilm knows exactly what they're looking for and their planning is always very detailed and focused."

He points out that, because the film itself won't really be done until near its May 2002 release date, certain images in the card set must be created in advance of their completion for *Attack of the Clones*. Fortunately, Industrial Light & Magic, the makers of Episode II's special effects, are prepared to create special renders exclusively for Wizards of the Coast. "We know some shots will appear in the final film because they're in the storyboards, for instance," Glenn says, "and we may be sure that we need a shot in the TCG that looks like those storyboards. But ILM may not be done with that particular shot until January, long after *Wizards* needs it. Well, the models that ILM built for that shot are already done and the scene itself is already in their queue. So, ILM will expedite that scene for us, shooting stills from that as-yet unfinished scene. This will likely give us some images that are from different angles or different zooms, making them unique to our cards."

For example, Glenn explains how the TCG team might want a shot of Obi-Wan's Jedi starfighter battling Slave I. "We may want some-

thing very specific," Glenn says, "like the Jedi starfighter zipping over the top of an asteroid, and *Slave I* coming from behind with the big glow from its engine extending out behind it. ILM will take their models, set up that scene for us based on the storyboards, and send it to us. Then we'll ask for whatever minor modifications we need to fit the art in the frames. Our particular scene, even though the scene itself will appear in the final film, could easily look noticeably different from how it ultimately looks, depending on the angles, the lighting, the zoom."

ART, TOO, DETOURED

The list of the cards currently slotted for inclusion in the first release, *Attack of the Clones*, drives Glenn's decisions about which images fit the game immediately and which ones require a bit more work to make them fit. "By comparing the images to the cardlist," Glenn points out, "I can determine both where holes are in the imagery and where the art actually provides new possibilities for card development. If an alien with an interesting image comes in, it's possible that a previously

If an alien with an interesting image comes in,
it's possible that a previously slotted character card could be
scrapped or at least revised to make room for an exciting new piece.

—Sean Glenn, *Wizards of the Coast* Star Wars Brand Art Director

STAR WARS

TRADING CARD GAME

ART EXTRAS

When collectors begin to track and document the cards that will be released in the first *Star Wars* TCG set, they'll want to be sure to check out the new line of action figures coming from Hasbro. As *Attack of the Clones* hits the streets as both a film and a trading card game, new artistically-styled 7 inch figures, and the rest of the *Star Wars* gang will start showing up in toy stores... with an added bonus.

"We're still working out all the specifics," *Star Wars* Brand Art Director Sean Glenn says, "but we're certain that we'll have promo cards packed in with the new action figures."

The current plan is for these promo cards to contain the same rules text and art as the cards they parallel from the first set. Glenn is in the process now of selecting the cards from the set.

To distinguish promo cards from the "regular" cards in the first set, the cards inserted into the action figure packages will have a unique promo stamp and no numbering.



slotted character card could be scrapped or at least revised to make room for an exciting new piece."

As the R&D development process for the card game dovetails with the art selection process, some vehicles, characters, or weapons might be delayed to the second release in 2002, so the precise number of cards in the set is still up in the air. Glenn is certain that every main character from Episode II will appear no later than the second release, as will a healthy number of background characters. "We expect between 150 and 180 cards in the first release," he says. "It's all about balancing the set's gameplay and its overall feel carefully."

To that end, the packaging design was completed well before the cards, giving Glenn his first taste of how the TCG fits into the *Star Wars* galaxy of games. "We've worked very closely with Lucasfilm to ensure a consistent brand identity, both from our and from the *Star Wars* side. It's great to work with a partner who knows exactly what they need from us; it's much easier than just taking shots in the dark!"

Now, after more than half-a-dozen visits to the Skywalker Ranch in California (which Glenn describes as looking "exactly like Naboo" in the springtime), he feels that he has a strong sense of how the finished card set will look, how it will fulfill Lucasfilm's expectations, and—most importantly—how its tone compares to the atmosphere of the movie. "The last three visits were to review the story for *Attack of the Clones*," he says. "We saw a few finished bits, then read an early draft of the script, then read the shooting script and saw some more finished scenes." Original con-

cerns about a possible lack of spaceships in the film have faded, which is good for the trading card game (which focuses on space as one of three arenas of combat). "There are a lot more ships than we had expected originally—because we [worried] we were going to have to generate quite a few ships," Glenn says. "It turns out that we won't lack imagery of ships after all." And while the *Attack of the Clones* set focuses primarily on Episode II, it will still contain some imagery from *The Phantom Menace* to make the universe more complete. "If a starship or a character like Darth Maul appears only in Episode I, this set and the next are good places to feature those images," Glenn says. The second set—currently titled *50th Rising*—will begin to move across the *Star Wars* timeline. Eventually, card expansions will come back to Episode III. In between films, Wizards expects to create sets that will feature the characters, ships, and locations of *A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Return of the Jedi*.

In the end, Glenn expects the imagery in the first card set to be largely taken directly from *Attack of the Clones*. "At a minimum, we'd like 60 to 70 percent of the cards to be scenes from the film," he says, "scenes that fans will instantly recognize. That's what makes the card set strong—playing into a fan's memory." He's holding back a few of the forms (the sheets cards are laid out on) until the last possible minute so as to introduce the most up-to-date images possible. "Creating the cards at the factory takes time," he says, "so January will be 'pencils down' for us for the first set, and March or April will be when we've run out of time to put art on the cards for the second set." ☐

We expect between 150 and 180 cards in the first release. It's all about balancing the set's gameplay and its overall feel carefully.

—Sean Glenn, *Wizards of the Coast Star Wars Brand Art Director*

THE FIGHTING 501ST

*The Empire may be gone—or still up and coming, depending on where you are in the film series—but the memory of its elite troops hasn't been forgotten. In fact, many stormtroopers still assemble under the banner of the **Fighting 501st**, an organization that has become an outpost for fans to display their armored costumes. It all began with a few photographs and a desire for a sense of a Star Wars community.*

by Michael G. Ryan

T. Ewan Johnson, a.k.a. Teytan, founder and original commander of the 501st.



"I WANTED SOMETHING THAT WOULD GIVE THE AVERAGE FANS
A COLLECTIVE IDENTITY AT
THE CONVENTIONS. A FAMILY
OF THEIR OWN."

—ALBIN JOHNSON

"I created a website called Detention Block 2551," recalls Albin Johnson, who began to form the 501st back in 1997 after attending the premiere of the *Star Wars* Special Edition release in full stormtrooper gear, along with his friend Tom Crews. "I posted pictures of us in our armor on that site. Not long after, I received a photo of Scott McArthur in his own armor, and he asked me to post it. That got the ball rolling. As the months passed, people began emailing me, telling me that they'd found armor too. When I finally put out an open invitation to send in pictures to appear in the Detention Block, I suddenly began to receive photos from all over the world."

Inspired by the high-profile presence and coverage of some *Star Trek* fan clubs, Johnson began to wonder if a similar club devoted to *Star Wars* would receive the same sort of reception. "I wanted something that would give the average fans a collective identity at the conventions, a family of their own," he says. When he coupled this thought with a vision



2. 501st troops march in Santa Monica, CA for Dragon*Con 2001.

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of a multitude of costumed stormtroopers descending on premieres and conventions, he knew he was onto something. The real clincher was a memory of a scrapbook of photos of his father, a World War II fighter pilot, with his flight school buddies—"all these cocky guys posing with cigars, leather jackets, and flight helmets. I thought it would be fun to create a fictional regiment within the Empire that my friends and I could claim membership to."

With that in mind, Johnson began to formulate a backstory for the group he would name for famous units like the 101st Airborne, first as a Squad and ultimately as a Legion. He noted that in the films, Lord Darth Vader always seemed to have specialized troopers ready and waiting for his orders, whether they were TIE pilots prepared to accompany him in defending the Death Star or snowtroopers at his elbow in the Hoth invasion. Johnson determined that the 501st could easily have been Vader's elite guards, and the backstory clicked into place.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

"Our club has always been an inclusive one," Johnson says, emphasizing that only one rule governs membership:

You must own a professional-grade costume of one of the Imperial characters as portrayed in the *Star Wars* movies. The website, www.501st.com, is an amazing database of fan photographs: stormtroopers, officers, pilots, and even bounty hunters from all over the world. Pre-Empire "bad guy" costumes are welcome as well, though that currently encompasses

3. Bob Seger is out there about anything but on the stage looking for trouble in America.



4. Bob Seger is out there about anything but on the stage looking for trouble in America.



5. Bob Seger is out there about anything but on the stage looking for trouble in America.

only Darth Maul and possibly a droid or two. The club has no dues or fees and operates as a not-for-profit organization. Johnson serves as the group's center, the "Legion Commander." Various branches, or "Garrisons," are spread all over the United States and England, Canada, Germany, Japan, and Sweden. These Garrisons break down into Squads, each of which is fronted by a Squad Leader. In remote areas where the 501st doesn't have enough members to merit even a Squad, Johnson designates Outposts. Finally, various administrative tasks for the organization are handled through Johnson's command. "We used to have military ranks, like Captains and Lieutenants," Johnson explains, "but we're shirking away from that now, out of respect for the true military." Every member receives a "TK designation," homage to the hapless TK-421 whom Luke and Han dispatched while aboard the Death Star. Newcomers choose their own designation (often a number of personal significance) with the caveat that the number must be unique among the many 501st members.

"I get an average of two membership requests a day," says webmaster Jason Brooks (TK-552), who spends close to 30 hours a week updating the website and an additional 10 hours each week fielding emails



6. Bob Seger is out there about anything but on the stage looking for trouble in America.

4. 501st Legionnaire Kevin O'Connor greets a fan. 5. 50th Lords visit a special patient at St. Christopher's Hospital in Philadelphia, PA. 6. Sandtroopers brighten a child's day at the Silver Lining Foundation Ranch in Aspen, CO Children's Cancer Unit.



Photo courtesy of the 501st and the 50th

7. Ossa Photo: The entire 501st contingent poses for the camera at DragonCon 2003. 8. Their kind of scam. The 501st is open to all kinds of fringe dwellers.

THE FIGHTING 501ST

Imperial pilots have the honor of waving the 501st flag.



Photo courtesy of the 501st and the 50th

related to the 501st, all of it on his own time. "When I started, there were only about 300 members total. Now we're at more than 800 members. Because of our rapid growth, I've had to redesign the website to accommodate all those incoming members. I'm making the site more dynamic, so that any member can update his or her own information without having to go through me. There are definite improvements on the horizon."

That membership soared under the temporary command of Legion Commander Scott Hawkins, and eventually, even Darth Vader himself became aware of the 501st's continued existence—actor Dave Prowse has lent his support to the organization as an Honorary Commander.

THE "ORIGINS" OF THE 501ST

Every organization—be it a fan club or a combat unit—begins with a common bond. In the case of the Fighting 501st, that bond is twofold, one real and one imagined. Whenever Albin Johnson and the other members of the ever-growing costume club get together to appear in public, they operate under the guise of an elite fighting force handpicked to serve the Empire's most sinister Dark Lord of the Sith...

Stormtroopers: deadly shock troops of the Emperor. Heartless, fearless, tenacious soldiers of unwavering loyalty who crush the enemies of the Galactic Empire.

This archive commemorates the greatest of all Stormtrooper units: the legendary Fighting 501st Squad, known as "Vader's Fist." Commissioned after the fall of the Old Republic, the 501st distinguished itself in hunting down and destroying scores of Rebel cells and outposts. Their accomplishments won the attention of the Emperor's right-hand man, Lord Vader, who made them his personal guard.

Whenever Vader's aims fall outside the realm of the Imperial bureaucracy, he calls upon the 501st to accomplish his bidding. The only cross-disciplinary squad in the Empire, it is composed of every kind of trooper, pilot, scout, or driver. Whatever agenda Lord Vader pursues, he is assured of the specialized manpower to accomplish it. The 501st is ready to be deployed to his side at a moment's notice. This resource is a testimony to Vader's power and often baffles generals who wonder how he manages to wage campaigns with little or no involvement with the normal ranks.

BEING A REALTROOPER

The 501st engages in all sorts of activities, from laser tag games to playing "Santa Trooper" (for a series of amusing Christmas images of TK-552 Jason Brooks in full seasonal gear, check out www.501st.com/titan/gallery_christmas_at_borders.htm). The bulk of the group's appearances, however, take place at charity events, conventions, and premieres. Though it's difficult for the entire organization to get together, squads of stormtroopers have visited children's hospitals, raised money for Child Haven and the Make-a-Wish Foundation, and turned out in "force" at the 1999 *Star Wars* Celebration in Denver. At this year's Dragon*Con, the club even held an impressive 100-trooper march through downtown Atlanta. They've appeared at local premieres of the re-released trilogy all over the world, as well as at video stores for video and DVD releases, at Halloween parties, at toy store events, anywhere the Empire might hold sway.

"We were also involved in the Blood War, a blood drive where we competed against the *Star Trek* Klingon fan clubs," Johnson recalls. "Most recently, we raised over \$3,000 for the September 11th Disaster Relief fund. And right now, our goal is to answer Steve Sansweet's challenge to get five-hundred-and-one troopers together at the *Star Wars* Celebration II next May."

9. 501st representative Scott Williams. 10. BuldoPett (Chris Edmond) shows off his hardware at the Lincoln South Park Christmas party. 11. Santa Trooper Jason Brooks in Seattle, WA.



12. Two troopers and their Johnson costume "Imperial Stormtrooper" guests at the South Carolina State Fair.

THE FIGHTING 501ST

King of the Jedi has the most power on the planet in Klingon, DC.



The group is, at its heart, fun loving and occasionally comical when dealing with the general public, posturing like the bad boys of the galaxy at events. While most people want and expect club members to act the part of rigid enforcers of the Empire's will, sometimes it's fun to break out of the mold. "Half the time, you'll see our group posing for photos where we're taking prisoners of ordinary fans," Johnson says, "and the other half, you'll see pictures of little kids getting the upper hand." He's also

WHY AREN'T YOU AT YOUR POST?

"No two members have the same ID number," Johnson says, referring to the "TK" designations given to incoming members. "Nor are the numbers ever retired—it's your number for life. This creates a sense of belonging and ownership for each member and helps to build the illusion of an alternate identity."

As time passed, the founder of the 501st discovered that the group consisted of more than just the standard stormtrooper costumes: sandtroopers, snowtroopers, bike scouts, AT-AT drivers, TIE fighter pilots, Imperial guards, and others had all joined the ranks. "So we improvised and created prefixes specific for those costumes," he explains. "More and more Imperial costumes followed, and we had to be creative to allow everyone to join in." Below is a list of prefixes the 501st currently uses, depending on the costume of the member. Some members have several costumes, but their number remains the same regardless of the gear they're wearing.

TK	Imperial stormtrooper
TD	Imperial sandtrooper
TI	Imperial fighter pilot
TB	Imperial scout trooper
TS	Imperial snowtrooper
TR	Imperial royal guard
TA	Imperial AT-AT pilot
TX	Imperial special operations trooper
ID	Imperial officer
SL	50th Lord
TG	Imperial gunner
TZ	Imperial spacetrooper
TT	Death Star (navy) trooper
TKP	bounty hunter

13. Members and visitors at the North Carolina chapter unite to visit Duke University Hospital. 14. Vader leaves cell Vader and Kurt when once through the halls of RegattaCon 2000. 15. Smooth Operator: Jay Sola (bottom left) poses with an all-male squad of Star Wars at RegattaCon 2001.



16. RegattaCon 2002. 17. Johnson gets stopped by SPD cops. 18. A Star Wars fan at the 2002 premiere of Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace. 19. Johnson at the premiere. 2001. 21. Which one's the real one? The Star Wars rules include the Death Star.

WE WANT YOU!

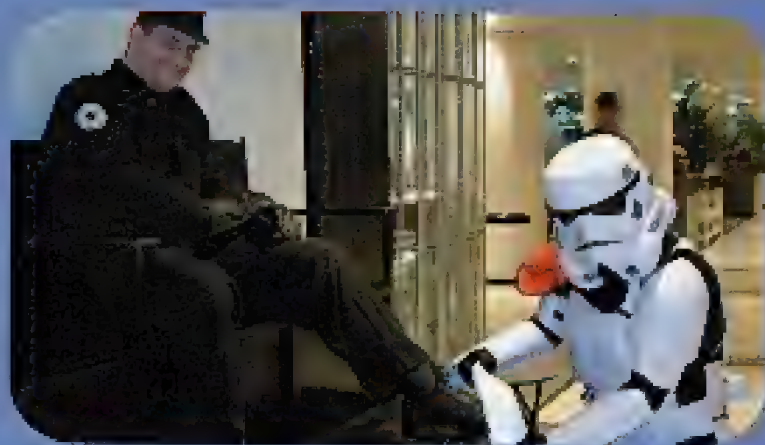
Thinking about enlisting and joining the proud ranks of Vader's Fist? If you have your armor and a great attitude and want to know more about the Fighting 501st, you can check out their website (www.501st.com) or write to membership@501st.com. If you're ready to sign up right away, send an email to enlist@501st.com, and get ready to wade into battle.



RegattaCon 2004. Regular troops of the 501st assemble for a group photo.

been known to dress up his five-year-old daughter Allie in a Leia or Amidala outfit, and he notes that she's often quick to take him prisoner.

So what began as an effort on Johnson's part to create an atmosphere where Star Wars fans could feel that they belonged to a larger community has become a stellar organization that continues to pay tribute to George Lucas's epic through community service and charitable work. "Of course, our ultimate goal would be to appear in a Star Wars film as stormtroopers," Johnson admits. "Who better to do it than born-and-bred fans? I haven't given up hope—after all, Samuel Jackson got his dream after dropping a public hint, right?"



Working on their promises, the 501st gets a close look from Jay Harris (top right).

A TROOPER'S (AND A JAWA'S) TALE

Cass and Jane Chin lead normal, average lives. At 33, he's an aerospace engineer for Boeing Satellite Systems in El Segundo, California; twenty-nine-year-old Jane is a regional scientific manager for Takeda Pharmaceuticals. Both have advanced degrees (a master's and a Ph.D., respectively), and both take great joy in their marriage.

Stormtrooper TK-103 and Jabbi the Jawa, however, lead lives that are anything but ordinary.

"I was nine years old, and Star Wars was like nothing I'd ever seen before," Cass says. "I thought the stormtroopers looked so cool I even made a suit out of paper when I was a kid, but, of course, it tore apart the first time I sat down. Years later, in 1998, he got some custom-built stormtrooper armor.

It seemed like an expensive hobby at the time, but Jane encouraged him to make the \$900 investment. "How many childhood dreams can we say that we fulfill in our lifetimes?" she said to me," Cass remembers. "Five hundred dollars is a small price to pay. If only all our childhood dreams were this easy to fulfill. I'm so lucky to have such a supportive wife."

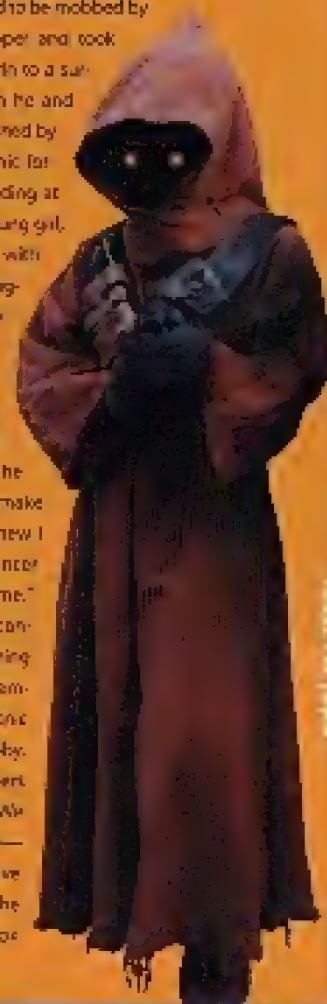
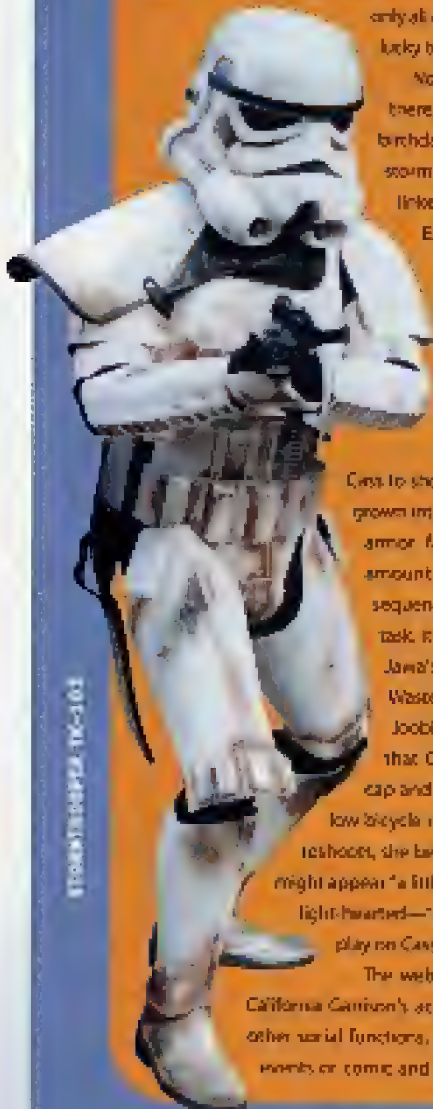
Not long after, Cass discovered the 501st website; there, he became TK-103 (January 3, both his and Jane's birthday). Through the site he met Van Matliza, another stormtrooper fan living in California, and in time, the two linked up with others who shared their passion for the Empire's soldiers. Eventually, the Southern California Garrison of the Fighting 501st was born. The garrison now has a website (www.fortunecity.com/yodaonline/acgarp/501/), which Jane maintains, and currently has roughly 40 members. Cass and Jane also have their own Star Wars-themed website (<http://yodaonline.fortunecity.com/yoda/444/content.html>), which Jane originally created for Cass to showcase photos of his trooper exploits. That site has grown into an impressive array of photos, stories, essays, and armor fabrications that the couple has put an enormous amount of effort into creating. Readers can learn the sequence for donning stormtrooper armor (not a simple task, it turns out) or check out a photo essay of Jabbi the Jawa's encounter with stormtroopers in the Jundland Wastes. (At 5' 2", Jane was a natural choice to portray Jabbi; her costume was handmade, with a facial frame that Cass designed from a coal hanger over a baseball cap and battery-operated flashlight mounted behind yellow bicycle reflectors to create a Jawa's glowing eyes. For photo shoots, she bends her knees to help out others in the shoot who might appear "a little short for a stormtrooper.") Much of the content is light-hearted—"BBOL," an Imperial droid featured on the site, is a play on Cass's nickname for Jane, "bebedew," for instance.

The website, however, is just a small part of the Southern California Garrison's activities. In addition to the periodic barbecues and other social functions, members frequently appear in costume at charity events or comic and sci-fi conventions. At Mann's Chinese Theater just

before the release of Episode I, Cass was thrilled to be mobbed by fans wanting photographs with a stormtrooper and took great pleasure in being able to speak Mandarin to a surprised hunk of Chinese tourists. And both he and Jane have moving memories of being approached by kids at the City of Hope's annual charity picnic for children coping with cancer. Cass recalls standing at full attention in his costume when he saw a young girl, no more than five years old and burdened with metal support struts on her arms and legs, struggling to approach him. She just wanted to shake a stormtrooper's hand, Cass readily obliged.

"And some of the children are blind or can barely see because of their illness," Jane adds. "The first time I attended an event as a Jawa, this little boy reached out for me—he could hardly see anything, but he could just make out the glowing eyes of the costume. He knew I was there. Coming from a background in cancer research, it was unbelievably meaningful to me."

As the countdown to *Attack of the Clones* continues, Cass and Jane look forward to appearing with the other Southern California Garrison members at various events like the City of Hope picnic and to speculate on the growth of their hobby. "We're so curious to see how stormtroopers evolved from battle droids," Cass admits. "We can see that the shooting will remain the same—they never could hit anything. Honestly, I love the stormtrooper costumes a lot more than the characters themselves. Stormtroopers may look cool, but they're fairly ineffective!"



"STORMTROOPERS MAY LOOK COOL
BUT THEY'RE FAIRLY INEFFECTIVE!"

—CASS CHIN



WATTO YOU LOOKING AT?

CREATING ANIMATED CHARACTERS FOR STAR WARS

BY ROB COLEMAN
ILM ANIMATION DIRECTOR



photo of Rob Coleman courtesy of ILM

For many of the animators at Industrial Light & Magic, Watto was their favorite character of *The Phantom Menace*. He had personality, an interesting design, a wonderful voice, and some terrific scenes opposite Liam Neeson. Who could resist the line, "What, you think you're some kinda Jedi, waving around your hand like that?" The Toydarian from Tatooine was an animator's dream come true.

But how does the computer graphics team at ILM bring a character like Watto to life? There are eight major steps through which any digital character must pass before it is ready for the big screen: design, modeling, backstory, voice, animation, acting, rendering, and compositing. Each step relies on the artistry and skill of a tremendous number of people at both Industrial Light & Magic and Skywalker Ranch.

DESIGN

Like all of the digital characters in the *Star Wars* universe, Watto began life in the imagination of George Lucas. No one is sure whether these things spring to life fully formed or require hours of development from fleeting images—and George isn't telling—but ultimately the job of putting them on paper falls to the art department at Skywalker Ranch. The artists sometimes work for weeks developing a single design, presenting their own ideas as well as drawings and small statues

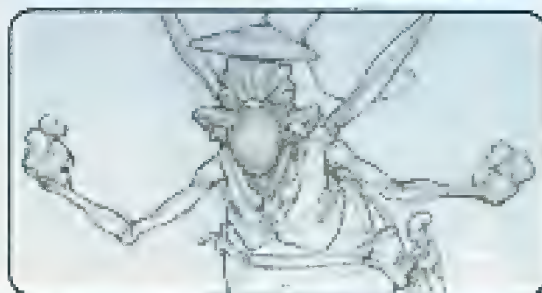
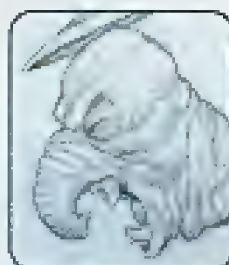
known as maquettes.

After George approves the design, we travel down the road to Industrial Light & Magic, where the animators will transform it into a fully animated character.

[LEFT] A rare close-up of Watto's "good" side.

[TOP RIGHT] Concept sketches by Jaim McCraig.

[BOTTOM RIGHT] Watto and Jack Hays see eye to eye.



SEEING A DIGITAL CHARACTER INTERACTING BELIEVABLY WITH AN ACTOR LIKE LIAM NEESON IS WHAT PUTS THE MAGIC IN ILM.



[CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT] Andy Secombe and Liam Neeson rehearse on set; the completed scene; Secombe stands in for Watto in the Padme boy; the store



MODELING

When Watto came to ILM, he arrived in the capable hands of creature modeling supervisor Geoff Campbell who, with his team, built all of the digital characters for *The Phantom Menace*. During the modeling phase, the animation director and modeling supervisor meet regularly to discuss hundreds of questions. How does the character move? What's his range of movement? Does he walk, fly, or crawl? How does the mouth move? Can the creature speak? If so, does it speak Basic (English) or an alien language? The answer to each question adds an element to the creature's appearance and personality, bringing it one step closer to life.

Watto's facial structure presented the modeling and animation team with some unique challenges. He had a very large nose—or a very small trunk, depending on how you look at it—as well as big tusks, and both features threatened to obscure the movement of his mouth. One of the solutions to these obstacles was to have Watto speak out of one side of his mouth. Chipping away his lower left tusk and having him speak out of that side of his mouth also proved to be an interesting personality trait that wasn't in the original voice performance, but it felt right for the character and added to his personality.

BACKSTORY

In a film, you can see how a character acts and how others react to him, but you don't know what's going on in his head. That's why animators are always interested in a character's backstory, the events of that character's life before he shows up on screen for the first time. Backstory helps the animation team understand the character more completely.

To create the backstory, the animators ask questions like, "Is he from Tatooine?" "Does he like the heat?" The answers to these questions can have a big effect on the animation. Whether he squints in the blazing sunlight or is constantly wiping his brow, Watto's smallest gesture can tell you a lot about his history, creating a more believable performance.

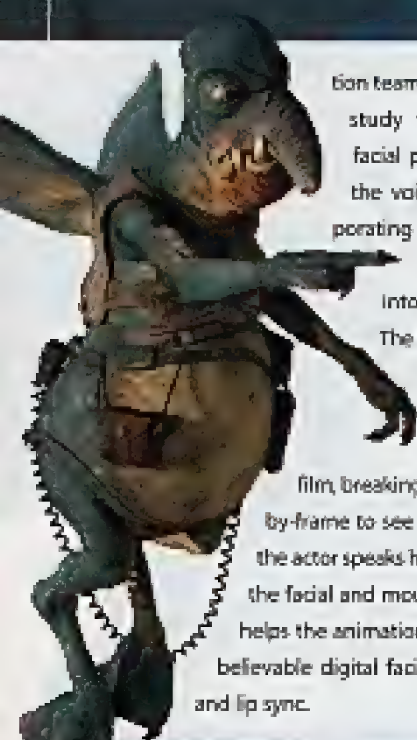
Other elements to Watto's backstory included that he was a gambler, a rough customer who aspired to more wealth and social standing. To help convey that aspect of his personality, the animators squinted one eye to make him look more like a pirate. He was older and tended to be grumpy, a quality he demonstrates the first time Anakin arrives on screen. To show his age, animators decided that Watto would fly all the time because his legs hurt. If you look carefully, you can see him scratching his legs to relieve the pain in a couple of scenes.

VOICE

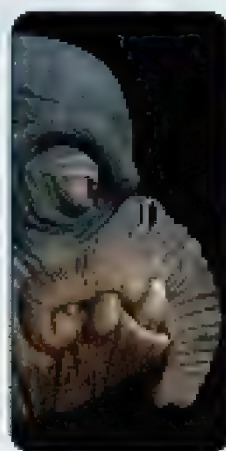
An animated character's voice is crucially important. As with the backstory, animators begin with questions when working with a voice. Does the character speak slow and thoughtfully? Or is his speech quick and agitated? The emphasis on particular words can give an animator insight into the character's state of mind.

Andy Secombe provided the voice of Watto, traveling to Tunisia with the first filming unit to deliver his lines alongside Liam Neeson and the other actors. George Lucas prefers to rehearse the voice talent and live actors together on set. That way, he can direct the voice and live performances as a unified whole. Once George is happy with the character interaction, the voice actor steps aside and performs off-screen so that ILM has a shot containing only the live actor, leaving space for the digital character to be added later.

The rehearsed shots, while not used in the final film, provide great reference for the anima-



tion team. The animators study the body and facial performances of the voice actor, incorporating his actions and expressions into the animation. The animators listen carefully to the voice while watching the film, breaking it down frame-by-frame to see how and when the actor speaks his line. Studying the facial and mouth movements helps the animation team create a believable digital facial performance and lip sync.



ANIMATION

Computer animation is surprisingly similar to puppet animation. For Watto, the ILM creature modeler Steve Applin built a three-dimensional model using ILM's sophisticated modeling software Iscupt. After the modeling was completed, James Tooley's technical animation setup gave Watto his skeleton, a computer-designed armature with controllers that allowed the animators to move the arms, legs, neck, and head. At the same time, the painters created the subtle colors to Watto's skin and clothing.

Making Watto move requires 24 frames per second. Rather than create each individual frame, an animator positions the character into the key poses of the scene and uses the animation software to help interpolate the motion between these milestones. Thinking of resting your hand on your knee, then raising it

to wave at a friend. To an animator, the key poses of that motion are your hand on your knee, then—12 frames later—your hand up in a waving position. The frames in between represent only a half-second of film time. To create an entire scene, animators "block through" the actions of a character, first in rough form, then later in increasingly refined detail, layering in various body parts to ultimately create one cohesive performance.

ACTING

The modeling crew created Watto's facial expressions using ILM's proprietary animation software, Carl. First, they compiled a library of shapes representing small movements of Watto's face. The library included blinks, raised eyebrows, various tongue and cheek shapes, and an extensive collection of mouth shapes that combined to form the look of a character pronouncing each of the vowel sounds. By combining these vowel shapes with closed mouth expressions, and employing the same key-pose approach used for the body, the animators could make Watto lip sync to Andy Secombe's voice performance.

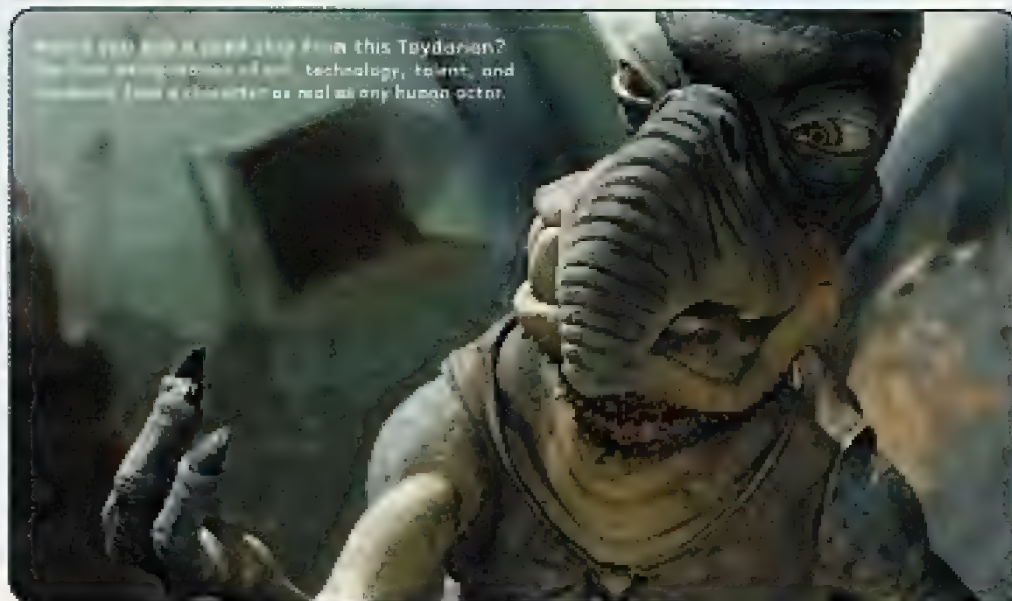
EDITING & COMPOSITING

One person leads the animation team and ensures that all efforts combine to create a unified character. While each animator might have a slightly different understanding of Watto and how he talks or moves, it's the animation director who coordinates with the director, reads the script, studies the voice

talent and visual references, and ensures that all of the various parts blend seamlessly together. Ultimately, his job is to make Watto look and act like the same character from shot-to-shot and scene-to-scene. Without this consistency, an audience can't believe the character is more than a collection of pixels. With it, an animated creature like Watto becomes a living, breathing character alongside the "real" actors.

Depending how complicated a scene is, an animator can spend anywhere from a few days to a couple of weeks bringing a few seconds of screen time to life. As the animation moves from rough blocking to final, George reviews the work in progress, viewing the animated characters alongside their human counterparts in the edited film. Once George approves the animation, the scene is passed on to the computer clothing team, then along to the technical directors, who add lighting. Finally, the scene goes to the compositors, who combine the live action backgrounds with the computer-animated foreground.

The process of bringing a character from the imagination of George Lucas to the screen of your local cineplex requires a vast team of modelers, painters, matchmovers, animators, technical directors, and compositors—but the result is the ultimate meeting of human and machine. Seeing a digital character interacting believably with an actor like Liam Neeson is what puts the magic in Industrial Light & Magic. 🍷



THE CORE RULES STRIKE BACK!

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS
WITH DAVE GROSS

THE REVISED STAR WARS ROLEPLAYING GAME ENHANCES THE RULES AND EXPANDS THE GALAXY

If the Wizards of the Coast R&D Jaws could turn back time and change one thing about the initial release of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, they'd have it come out at the same time as *The Phantom Menace*. That way, a new generation of fans could step out of the movie theater and join the legion of gamers who already find epic adventure in that galaxy far, far away.

Fortunately, *Attack of the Clones* brings that opportunity around again, and those crafty Jaws know better than to miss that second chance. And as long as they are taking the chance to improve the timing of the game's release, why not improve a few other things along the way? While they were at it, they figured

throwing in a few of the most popular rules from *Star Wars Gamer* and their own campaigns would be a nice bonus. Finally, who could resist the temptation to add new, never-before-seen material from *Attack of the Clones*?

Not those impulsive little Jaws.

In April 2001, Wizards of the Coast presents a revised edition of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. At 384 pages with over 30 new illustrations, the new version not only cries out to new players but also delivers enhanced rules and expanded campaign information for veterans.

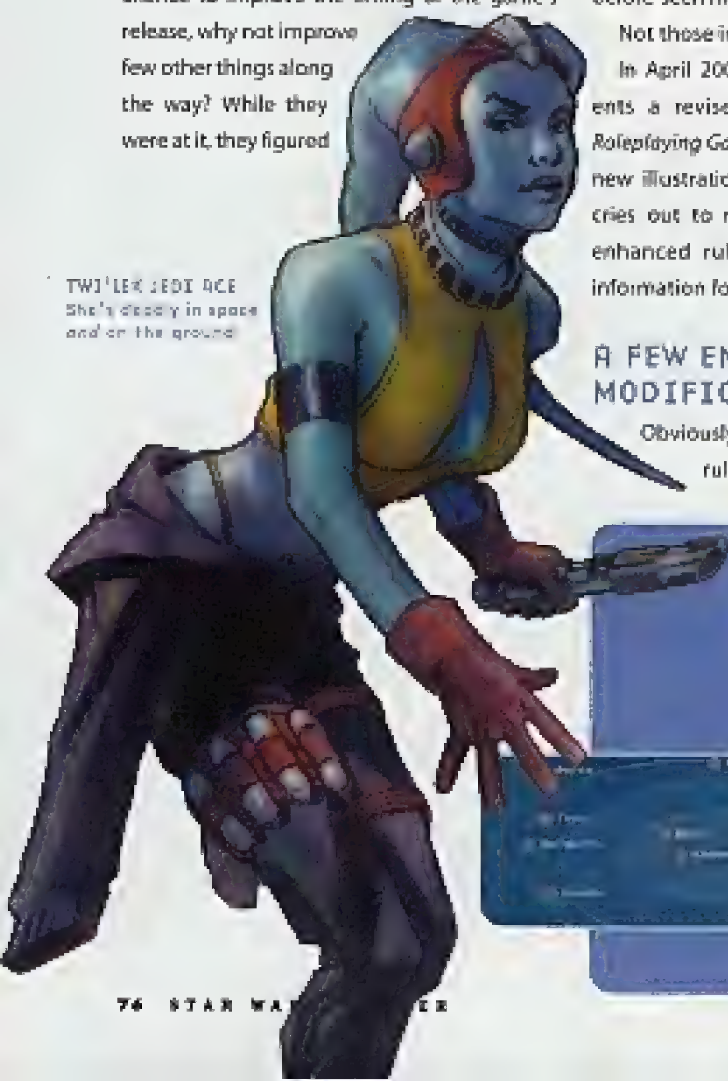
A FEW ENGINE MODIFICATIONS

Obviously, the first step in revising any rules system is to incorporate the

errata from the previous edition. Depending primarily on the feedback from fans—the real experts of any game—the designers have made dozens of clarifications and improvements to the rules, ensuring peace and game balance throughout the *Star Wars* galaxy. Furthermore, the book gets a visual makeover with more color and an improved layout that lets you find the information you need quickly and easily.

Revisions to the basic rules include expanded skill and feat descriptions, clearer rules for grappling and disarming foes, a more intuitive experience award system, updated character game stats, and concise mechanics governing healing and death. Reputation becomes a modifier that you can add to certain rolls when trying to throw your weight around. A character with a reputation modifier can add this bonus to any situation where his reputation might affect the outcome. Your reputation modifier increases with level, and the Gamemaster now has rules for increasing a character's reputation modifier based on heroic accomplishments.

TWIL'EX JEDI ACE
She's deadly in space
and on the ground.



TOP 10 NEW ADDITIONS TO THE REVISED RULES

10. NEW JEDI PRESTIGE CLASSES. Want to play a Jedi who can petty-entire dread starlighters? Squadrons? How about a Jedi who can train the most irritating young Padawan? Maybe you'd rather be a Jedi who hunts down and/or rescues members of the galaxy. Now, you can play them all: the skilled Jedi ace, the wise Jedi healer, and the stealthy Jedi investigator.

9. THREE ERA-SPECIFIC MAPS OF THE GALAXY. See how the star-wars galaxy looks during the eras of the Old Republic, the Rebellion, and The New Jedi Order. Perfect for GMs who like to run campaigns in two or more eras.

ATTACKS OF OPPORTUNITY add a new dimension of realism to Star Wars combat.



MORE HEROES, MORE CHOICES

Every class gets a boost. Check out the improved deflect blaster progression for Jedi characters, the scout's new bonus feats, and a more powerful way for nobles to ask for favors, just to name a few. While the existing classes all enjoy a tune-up, the starfighter ace prestige class is expanded to include the highly skilled space transport pilot. In the hands of a starship ace, even the most ungainly freighter can become a maneuverable weapon of war.

Droid rules were the most-requested addition to the game from the moment of its publication. You wanted 'em, so you got 'em. Based on material from *Star Wars Gamer* #3, new rules allow you to build your own droid here, whether a cunning astromech scout, a medical droid reprogrammed as a soldier, or an independent protocol droid bounty hunter. Give your droids quirks, special programs, built-in gear, and weapons—but steer clear of those nasty memory wipes! New rules for resetting those irritatingly “personable” droid brains give the mechanical something to fear more than death.

GRITTIER COMBAT

Dedicated gamers know that the d20 rules that drive the *Star Wars* game come from the

grandfather of all roleplaying games, *Dungeons & Dragons*. One rule that did not originally come over from D&D to *Star Wars* is the ever-popular attack of opportunity. Now GameMasters and players can use an improved version of the rule to add a new level of realism to combat, whether you're fighting countless stormtroopers or nefarious Sith Lords.

Armor no longer modifies your Defense. Instead, it provides damage reduction. Thus, wearing armor won't make you harder to hit—quite the contrary!—but it can reduce the damage you take from that searing blaster bolt to the chest!

Perhaps the most impressive change is a new rules system that allows you to play out starship and vehicle battles on a square grid, much like personal combat, and expands easily to cover conflicts between starships and smaller-scale planetary vehicles like airspeeders and ground transports. Finally, you can pit your X-wing against that AT-AT walker!

While you must wait until April for the revised edition of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, you can enjoy an advance look at the starship combat rules in *Star Wars Gamer* #8, on sale now. ☺

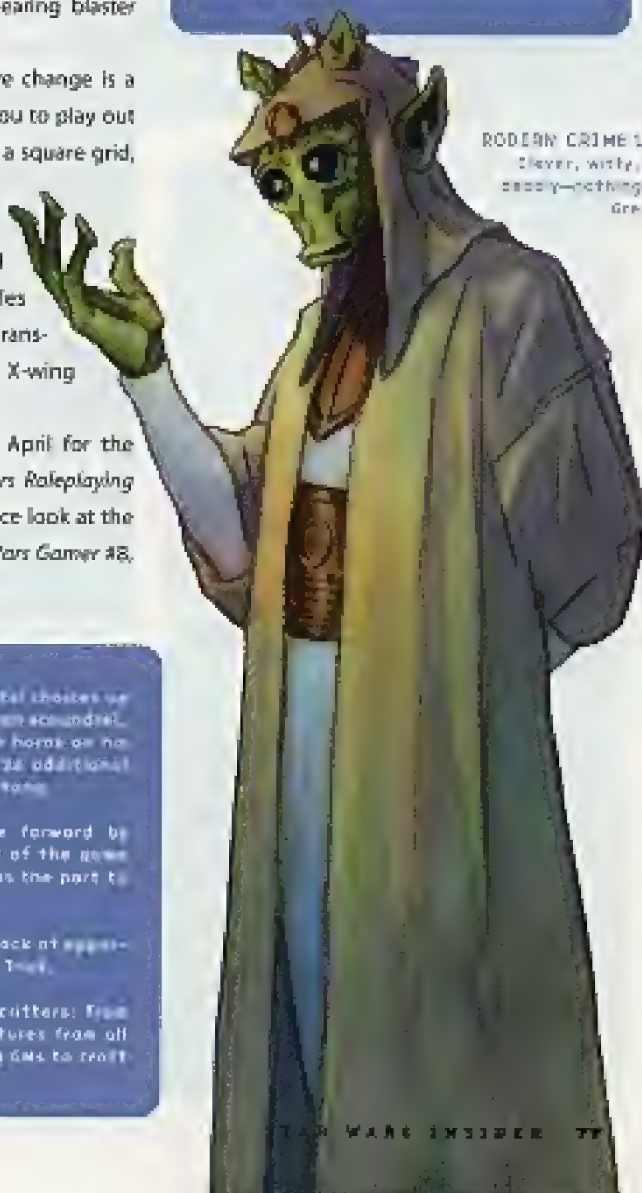
4. **NEW ART.** The revised book features full-color illustrations for every character species and prestige class. Our new favorite is the hedon crime lord, but it's a close call!

3. **DARK SIDE FORCE FEATS AND PRESTIGE CLASSES.** The revised rulebook incorporates some of the goodies from the *Dark Side Sourcebook*, including the Bruin Brang and Rube Feats. The dark side Force feats and Force side narrow-gauge classes, and the revised rules for working characters with dark side points. Now players can court the dark side or feel the full wrath of Darth Maul and Darth Vader.

2. **THE TECH SPECIALIST.** This new class allows you to play a wizard jury-rigged, a droid doctor, a cyborg, or a droid shipbuilding engineer, just to name a few. With lots of skill points, rules for crafting weapons, and unlimited mechanicals, the tech specialist has a special niche in your bank of *Star Wars* heroes.

1. **ATTACK OF THE CLONES FEATURES.** Rules and episode 0 game statistics exist for Skywalker, Padmé Amidala, Mace Windu, Jango Fett, Count Dooku, Jedi Knights, Anakin, Republic assault ships and gunboats, new creatures (B, of them?), Geonosians and Kaminoans, and much, much more.

MODERN CRIME LORD
Clever, witty, and
daddy—noting like
Greedo.



8. **MORE CHARACTER SPECIES.** A half-dozen new heroic species bring the total choices up to a Wookiee-staggering 30+ teams. With the revised rules, you can play a Summertime scoundrel, a Kat-dar demented rescuer, or a Zabrak noble with more favors to call in than horns on his skull. The book also provides GMs with information and balanced game stats for 32 additional alien species that can be utilized as heroes, including Chiss, Jawas, and Tusken Wogs.

7. **NEW FORWARD AND INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.** Read the new forward by Lucasfilm's resident *Star Wars* expert and collector, Steve Sansweet, and get all of the game rules in a nutshell within the book's revamped, easy-to-digest introduction. This is the part to show a friend when you want a new player to join your campaign.

6. **NEW SKILLS AND FEATS.** Five new skills and 25 new feats, including new attack of opportunity feats, Improved Critical, and the Force feats Deepvision, Focus, and Mind Trick.

5. **RULES FOR CREATING CREATURES.** The galaxy is home to all kinds of critters: From predators to parasites, scavengers to vermin. In addition to detailing more creatures from all five feature films, the revision includes complete creature creation rules, allowing GMs to craft their own new beasts.

FLIRTING WITH THE DARK SIDE

BY DANIEL WALLACE
SPECIAL THANKS TO JASON FRY

JAINA SOLO'S NEW MASTER

The New Jedi Order series hit the halfway mark with November's *Star by Star*, which also saw some devastating developments in the New Republic's war with the Yuuzhan Vong. Fans picking up the next installment, *Dark Journey*, can't help but wonder—where does the saga go from here? *Star Wars Insider* caught up with author Elaine Cunningham to discuss her novel, a standalone softcover that focuses on Han and Leia's daughter, Jaina Solo.

Q: In *Dark Journey*, how did you handle transitioning the readers from the apocalyptic last chapter of *Star by Star*?

A: There's no break whatsoever. The story picks up as Jaina and the survivors flee aboard a stolen Yuuzhan Vong ship. And that, I think, is part of Jaina's problem. She had no time to catch her breath, to grieve or think or plan. When you don't know where you're headed, chances are you're not going to like where you end up.

Q: And, physically at least, she ends up on Hapes—a world introduced in *The Courtship of Princess Leia* and last seen in *Agents of Chaos II: Jedi Eclipse*. Why did you decide to return to Hapes?

A: Hapes is a matriarchy, recently ruled by Ta'a Chume, a powerful and evil queen. I liked the notion of a malevolent, manipulative force working in a young Jedi's life.

Q: What do you think of Jaina as a character? How difficult was it to get under her skin?

A: Jaina was depicted in the Young Jedi Knights series as impulsive, a natural leader, extremely talented but more interested in the practical side of life than the philosophical. When the Yuuzhan Vong came, she was eager to join the war effort. Her life was about meeting the challenge, doing what needed



to be done. Then, all of a sudden, she seemed resentful toward Leia for taking the same path that she, Jaina, was embracing. I had a hard time getting my head around that.

There are certain parallels in my family history that made the process even more difficult. My father was about Jaina's age—sixteen—when World War II hit his native Poland. Like Jaina, he was raised in a military family with expectations of service and responsibility. Had war not intervened, he would have attended military academy. His parents and brother

were captured and sent to Russian camps. Alone in a country torn between two invading armies, he escaped, lied about his age, and joined the British forces. I doubt he spent much time thinking about whether or not his parents were sufficiently "there for him" during his childhood. Jaina was on her own, a fighter pilot in a renowned squadron. Duty, responsibility: This was what she was raised and trained to do. I thought she'd be more likely to identify with Leia than criticize her. But there it was, and I had to figure it out in a way that made sense to me.

I found the key in Jaina's impulsive nature, and in her resemblance to her father, Han Solo. Like Han, Jaina reacted to tragedy by striking out at the people closest to her—this was a reaction, and not an admirable one, but not necessarily a true reflection of her feelings. Also, when families are under stress, kids tend to take sides whether their parents prompt them to or not. Jaina would be likely to identify with Han, and this could make her hypercritical of her mother. Once I made this connection, Jaina really started to come alive for me.

Q: Jaina is eighteen now, and while she's been busy in the past with saving the galaxy, she's certainly overdue for some romance in her life. How do you see her romantic situation as set forth in *Dark Journey*—old flame Zekk, potential new flame Jag Fel, and a dark horse like Kyp Durron?

A: This question was bound to come up in some form. We've got a female protagonist, a female author, and a pink and green cover. What we don't have, however, is a romance novel.

Earlier books have hinted that Jaina just doesn't feel that old spark for Zekk. He was a



photo courtesy of Elaine Cunningham

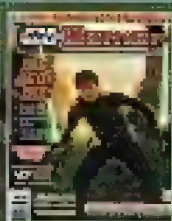
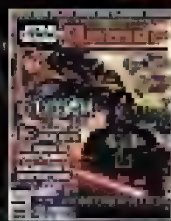
childhood friend, maybe even a first crush, but she has moved on. Jag Fel intrigues her. I see their interaction as very similar to that between a young Han and Leia—only the roles are flipped. Jag is about honor and duty, and Jaina, at least to a by-the-books guy like Jag, falls closer to the “scruffy scoundrel” mark. In Greg Keyes’ *Rebirth*, there was also a weird spark between Jaina and Kyp. The rogue Jedi Master asked her to be his apprentice. Was that a ploy to diffuse her suspicions and make her more likely to fall for his Sempidal deception (a rogue military strike against an enemy civilian target), or was he serious? And if so, to what end? Was the pull Jaina felt toward Kyp the result of the “nudge” he gave her thinking, or something else? Fascinating questions, all. But at this point in her life, Jaina sees romance—any romance—as a distraction, and distractions make her impatient and even a little angry.

Q: Tenel Ka, Zekk, Lowbacca, and other familiar faces from the Young Jedi Knights series play a supporting role in your book. Did you read those books to get a feel for the characters?

A: Absolutely. I read every one of the Young Jedi Knights books, and most of the other *Star Wars* novels as well. Not to mention stacks of gaming materials, comic books, and the old *Star Wars Adventure Journal* magazine. I approach any shared-world project as if it were historical fiction. The books, gaming supplements, comic books, and movies are the “history.” If the details aren’t right, if the tone doesn’t ring true, the story won’t work.

“LIKE HAN, JAINA REACTED TO TRAGEDY BY STRIKING OUT AT THE PEOPLE CLOSEST TO HER—THIS WAS A REACTION, NOT AN ADMIRABLE ONE, BUT NOT NECESSARILY A TRUE REFLECTION OF HER FEELINGS.”

—ELAINE CUNNINGHAM



(TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT)

“The Crystal,” art by Mikael Naguchi;
“Red Sky, Blue Flame,” art by Marc Saba;
“The Apprentice,” art by Scott
Star Wars Gamer #5, #7, and #8

Q: How many short stories have you written for *Star Wars Gamer* magazine?

A: Three. The first, “The Crystal,” (*Star Wars Gamer* #5) was a bridge between Jaina as she was portrayed in the Young Jedi Knights series, and the hotshot pilot she becomes in *Vector Prime*. “Red Sky, Blue Flame” (*Star Wars Gamer* #7) dealt with an episode in Jag Fel’s early life, and the difficulty of finding a place for himself in Chiss society. The third, “The Apprentice,” (*Star Wars Gamer* #8) focuses on an event that occurs during *Dark Journey*.

Q: Finally, what’s your take on Episode II’s title, *Attack of the Clones*?

A: I like it. It makes direct reference to the Clone Wars, something that’s an important part of (*Star Wars*) lore. The title lets (everybody) know that a vital, missing piece of the story is about to fall into place. I can’t wait!

Elaine Cunningham’s next book, *The Wizardwar*, book three in the *Forgotten Realms* “Counselors & Kings” trilogy, will be published in March. Visit her website at www.elainecunningham.com.

STAR WARS: THE APPROACHING STORM

More than two decades after he first wrote the novelization for *Star Wars: A New Hope* and penned the very first *Star Wars* spin-off novel with *Splinter of the Mind’s Eye*, Alan Dean Foster returns to the galaxy far, far away with *The Approaching Storm*.

Just as *Splinter* took place in the gap between Episodes IV and V (and was published in the real-world gap between the films’ releases), *The Approaching Storm* acts as a bridge novel between Episodes I and II. Unlike its predecessor, however, *Storm* was designed from the start to hint at the events of the next movie. Titled on the cover as the “prologue to *Star Wars: Episode II*,” the book will prep fans on the political state of the Republic—and the character struggles of a teenaged Anakin Skywalker—that will be waiting for them in multiplexes this May.

The Approaching Storm pairs Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker with new Episode II Jedi characters Luminara Unduli and Baelia Offee. The four Jedi are ordered to mediate a border dispute on the planet Ansion, whose city dwellers are threatening to join the galaxy’s growing secessionist movement unless they are permitted to take over the ancestral lands belonging to Ansion’s nomadic tribes. With the stability of the Republic in their hands, the heroes must negotiate a settlement before a hidden enemy destroys all their hard work. *The Approaching Storm* goes on sale January 27, 2002.



BOUNTY HUNTERS

WE DON'T NEED THEIR SCUM

BY DANIEL WALLACE

Admiral Piett's sneering dismissal of Bossk, Dengar, Zuckuss, 4-LOM, and Boba Fett is a dead tip-off that he's not much of a *Star Wars* fan. Everyone knows that bounty hunters are über-cool, and the Expanded Universe literature proves that we really do need their scum. These rogues-for-hire flex their muscles in books such as Bantam's *Tales of the Bounty Hunters* and Chronicle's *Auma Sing: Dawn of the Bounty Hunters* Masterpiece Edition. Boba Fett and his mates have also starred in *Star Wars: Underworld: The Yavin Vassilika*, the comic adaptation of *Shadows of the Empire*, and other Dark Horse Comics adventures.

What is it about bounty hunters that make them so appealing? Often pegged as bad guys, they are in fact politically neutral. Money, not ideology, motivates bounty hunters, and for every captured Rebel they bag two mass murderers and three escaped convicts. (In fact, bounty hunters are so prominent in *Star Wars* you begin to wonder if the galaxy has any legitimate police.) Unfortunately for the heroes in this saga, the villains are the ones with the deepest pockets. We all saw what happened to Han Solo when a bounty hunter named Fett

claimed the hefty price on his head.

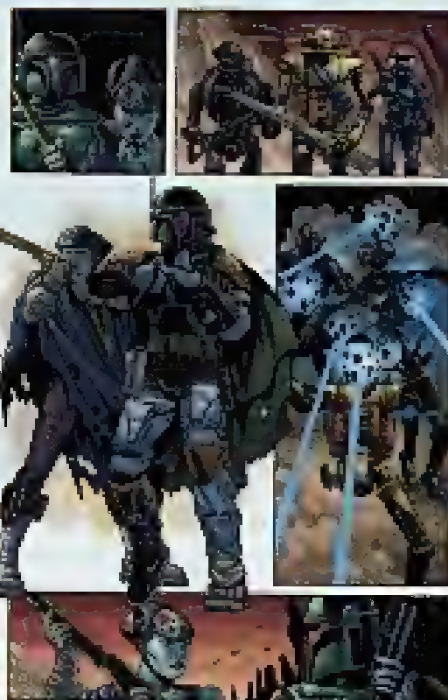
George Lucas certainly knows the strange appeal of the antihero. As the *Star Wars* prequel trilogy begins to get grimmer in *Attack of the Clones*, bounty hunters are filling the shadows between the light side's Jedi and the dark side's Sith. A brand new Fett, Boba's father Jango, has joined the cast, as has Zam Wesell. To prepare readers for the characters' introduction in *Attack of the Clones*, Lucasfilm has authorized Dark Horse Comics to release two interlocking one-shots: *Jango Fett*, released in early 2002, and *Zam Wesell*, released shortly after.

Both comics are written by industry veteran Ron Marz, whose résumé includes a series-

changing, seven-year stint on DC's *Green Lantern* and, more recently, Dark Horse's *Darth Maul* miniseries and two contributions to *Star Wars Tales*—a Darth Vader story and an imaginary Maul vs. Vader showdown. Reflecting on his *Star Wars* work, he jokes, "I guess I'm the 'Bad Guy' guy."

Marz credits the saga as one of the inspirations behind his decision to enter the comics field. "I was just the right age when *Star Wars* hit in '77, almost eleven years old. It made a lasting impression, obviously, and I think it's probably one of the big reasons I do what I do as a career. I wish I could go back to the eleven-year-old me and tell him, 'Guess what you get to do in twenty years!'"

Jango Fett and *Zam Wesell* are standalones, but their plots intertwine. Despite their titles, there's plenty of Jango Fett in *Zam Wesell* and vice-versa. It's the nature of the bounty-hunting business for hunters to compete over their bounties, and this atmosphere of professional envy defines the relationship between Zam and Jango. Marz also deepened the connection between these two top agents by exploring their unspoken physical attraction. "I just played it up as much as I could. The sexual tension added another layer in addition to the



Zam Wesell, artist Neal Rodden drew the page pictured above before he got the job. He was asked to draw Boba Fett, not a female bounty hunter.





"I REALLY LIKE ZAM, HER LOOK, HER COSTUME. BUT JANGO HAS THE ARMOR, WHICH I'VE LOVED FOR TWO DECADES. THAT'S A BIG APPEAL."

—TED NAIFEH

Illustration by Ted Naifeh & Tom Fowler

competition between two bounty hunters."

Ted Naifeh, artist on *Zam Wesell*, says he's more than just a casual *Star Wars* fan, having seen the original movie in the theater twenty-four times as a kid. He got involved with *Zam Wesell* after working on the small press *Goth comic GloomCookie* and a *Buff*: *Tales of the Slayer* short story for Dark Horse. When he heard of a new *Star Wars* project, he sent some art samples to his regular editor, Scott Allie. "He offered me a chance to do the *Zam* book right away," says Naifeh, "but I had to do a sample page of *Boba Fett* and a female bounty hunter companion. I had no idea what *Zam* was going to look like or anything else about her, so I just pulled out my big *Art of Star Wars* book, flipped to the *Fett* pages, and went crazy. They were very happy with the results.

"When I got the reference for *Zam*, I was shocked at how similar she was to my own female bounty hunter from the sample page. Their helmets were similar, and I gave her a long sniper rifle, unaware that *Zam* actually uses a similar weapon in the movie. It was very weird."

As a longtime fan, Naifeh is happy to be working on an *Attack of the Clones*-related product. "It's pretty thrilling to have the

sharp action, and she doesn't seem to lose control. In the reference I have of her, she just oozes composed deadliness.

"I really like *Zam*, her look, her costume. But *Jango* has the armor, which I've loved for two decades. That's a big appeal."

Tom Fowler, artist on *Jango Fett*, was also struck by the hunter's iconic armor. Known for his roleplaying art as well as the *Bande dessinée* (French graphic album) *Palooka* from Editions Paquet, Fowler brings a unique look to the book with fully painted illustrations. His previous *Star Wars* work includes the short story "The Death of Captain Tarpals" for *Star Wars Tales*, a coincidental assignment, since his former college roommate was one of *Jar Jar's* animators at Industrial Light & Magic. "I like *Jar Jar*," Fowler says. "He's fun to draw."

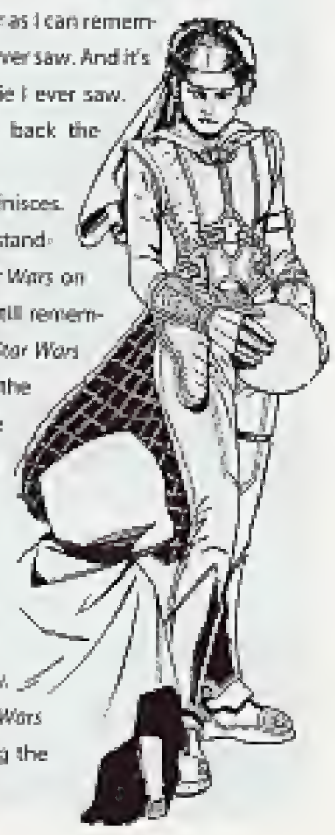
Going from *Jar Jar* to *Jango* is like throwing your car from fifth gear into reverse, but Fowler enjoyed tackling the man in the Mandalorian armor. "When I was growing up, all my friends loved *Boba Fett* but I never did, I loved the silent bounty hunters. I loved *Bossk*. What got me into *Boba Fett* was *Cam Kennedy* [artist of *Dark Empire* and *Boba Fett: Death, Lies, and Treachery*], whose stuff is just phenomenal and who does a great down-and-dirty *Fett*."

In fact, due to the project's tight security, Fowler first thought he'd been hired to work on a new *Boba Fett* comic. "Scott Allie called and said he had this *Boba Fett* graphic novel and wanted to put my name up for it," Fowler submitted some *Boba Fett* sketches to Scott that were then sent to Lucasfilm, and eventually the call came back telling him he had the job—but with one minor switch. "Great job," Scott said. "Here's the thing, though—it's not *Boba Fett*!"

Despite *Boba* and *Jango's* similar wardrobe, Fowler says it's easy to distinguish them visually. "*Jango* has a really sleek look to him as opposed to *Boba*. His armor is newer, all blue and silver. With *Boba* I always got the impression he was patched together. *Jango* is like the *James Bond* of *Star Wars*."

As *Jango* and *Zam* take their places in the rogues' gallery alongside *Bossk*, *Dengar*, *Zuckuss*, *4-LOM*, *Boba Fett*, and *Aurra Sing*, Fowler looks back on the movie that started it all. "*Star Wars* is, as far as I can remember, the first movie I ever saw. And it's also the second movie I ever saw. My parents took us back the very next night."

Ron Marz also reminisces. "I can still remember standing in line to see *Star Wars* on summer evenings. I still remember buying *Marvel's Star Wars* comics and buying the action figures. Those are very fond, magical memories for me, so to be able to contribute to the expanded universe as an adult is just a wonderful opportunity. Now I'm writing *Star Wars* comics and still buying the action figures." 🙌



THE DEATH STAR TRASH COMPACTOR

DROP IN AND STAY AWHILE
UNLESS YOU HAVE ANOTHER PRESSING ENGAGEMENT

Among the myriad of Death Star corridors and chambers at Elstree Studios in London, there was one set far less polished than the rest. The dripping, rusty walls of the trash compactor were too dirty for the gleaming white armor of regular Imperial stormtroopers. Only our heroes dared go where no one else would, but not because they wanted to.

BY CHRISTOPHER
SCOTT BROWN

Peter Mayhew was reluctant to descend into the murky water wearing the knitted mohair and yak-hair Wookiee suit. Although he primarily stayed on the ledge close to the exit door, his costume still retained an unpleasant odor from the dampness. All the actors wore rubber suits under their costumes, which became uncomfortable when their skin wrinkled after hours of shooting. While Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford only had to wade through the foam-and-plastic Imperial waste, Mark Hamill was submerged repeatedly. Between takes he had to shed the costume, get blown dry and suited back up, only to be soaked again. After the third time he was dragged underwater by the trash compactor's resident monster, the dianoga, Hamill picked a bit of gunk off his white armor. He turned to George Lucas, who was deep in thought concentrating on the next take, and sang, "Pardon me George, could this be Dianoga poo-poo?" (To the tune of "Chattanooga Choo-Choo.") The impromptu attempt at humor failed to get a chuckle out of the director; instead, Hamill was knocked back into the water. Or so the story goes.

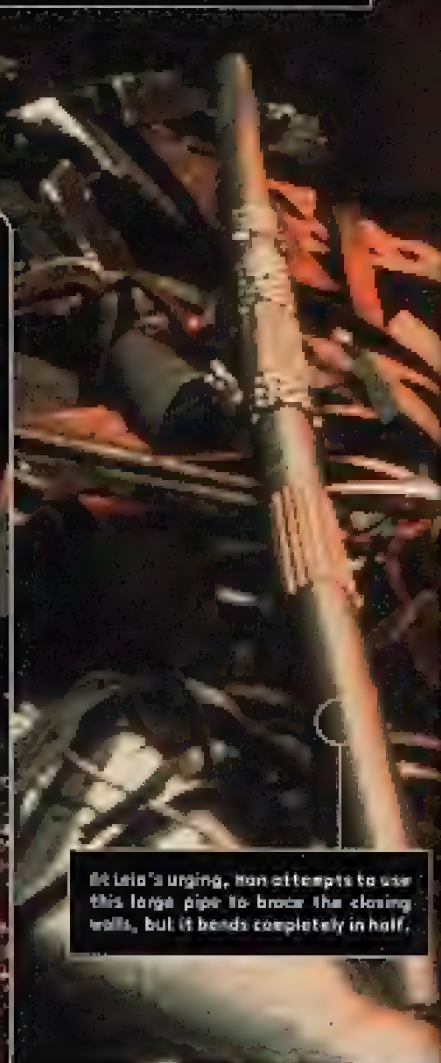
The dianoga lurking in the depths went through various designs prior to filming. Originally the prop makers built a tentacle several yards long, a size that proved too large for the tiny set. Another version of the creature

was a brown blob that resembled the stuff that inspired Mark Hamill's little song. Ultimately, the single octopus-like tentacle and periscope eye became the menace of the trash compactor set operated from below by a pair of divers. The earlier designs were retired to the real trash outside the studio walls.

The name dianoga was derived from the revised first draft of the Star Wars screenplay. In it "Jedi Nagas" were the galactic warriors we now know as the Jedi.



Mark Hamill loses that fabulous blow-dry do, only to get it back in time for the next plunge.



At Leia's urging, Han attempts to use this large pipe to brace the closing walls, but it bends completely in half.



Stormtrooper blaster rifles like Han's were made from British Sterling Mk. 4 submachine guns with short heavy artillery sighting telescopes mounted on top.



The ridged grip of the Imperial carlink prop was also used as the muzzle of Greedo's blaster pistol. Many detail pieces were "found" parts repeated on different props.



Stormtrooper armor was made from vacuformed plastic. Flat sheets of plastic were heated and shaped to a mold by a vacuum pump.



The Imperial rifle prop Chewbacca carries (and tries to stop the wall with) was a slightly modified German MG-34 machine gun. These were produced during the late 1930s and early 40s, and they were widely used during World War II.

Much of the Imperial garbage is painted blocks of Styrofoam.

STAR WARS

SUPER COLLECTOR SURPRISE AT CELEBRATION II

HOW MUCH WOULD YOU PAY FOR THE BOSS' JOHN HANCOCK? REPRO LUNCH BOXES, HOLIDAY ADS, AND REALLY BIG T'S

I hope the holidays were good to you ... or you were good to you ... or you were good to your kids or loved ones or friends who were looking for that one *Star Wars* figure ...

Ah, who am I kidding? If you're reading this column, you're looking for more than one figure at gift-giving time, even in a period when there isn't a huge quantity of new stuff in the stores. That's deliberate, by the way. There's a new movie coming up shortly. But you knew that.

Soon we'll be able to buy the first figures from *Attack of the Clones*, and they are doozies. By now you've probably all seen the new packaging for the figures. Soon it will be the rest of the Hasbro line as well as photos of the Preview figures themselves. Very nice job, folks!

I do want to give all of you action figure collectors a heads-up about a very special figure that will be available for purchase only at *Star Wars Celebration II* at the Indiana Convention Center in the heart of Indianapolis May 3-5. Produced in the most limited numbers of any action figure ever to my knowledge, this packaged figure will truly delight you. It's also a figure you're definitely going to want to have at least one out of the package.

Part of the fun is that the identity of the figure isn't going to be revealed—or at least confirmed—in advance. An equal amount will be available for pur-

chase each day of Celebration. And the Celebration store will open an hour early for *Star Wars* Fan Club members—which is a no-lose situation as you can see elsewhere in *Insider*. (You pay \$29.99, get the regular \$19.99 yearly subscription to the magazine and an immediate \$10 gift certificate to the online *Star Wars* store). There will be a number of other privileges for Fan Club members at Celebration II, as there already are membership benefits connected with online merchandise purchases.

There are lots of cool, exclusive products being developed for the Celebration II store, and—unlike at the first fan convention in 1999—these products won't be available for purchase once the store closes at 4 P.M. May 5.

In addition, there will be a full Collectibles track at Celebration II, with panels of top collectors discussing everything under the sun from customizing to inven-



toring to storing to building a collection. Want an evaluation of your possibly precious *Star Wars* whatchamacallit? Our version of *Antiques Roadshow* is scheduled. We're also planning some auctions. www.starwarscelebration.com will have constant updates. Whew!

Now on to your questions.

IT'S REAL, BUT IS IT WORTH IT?

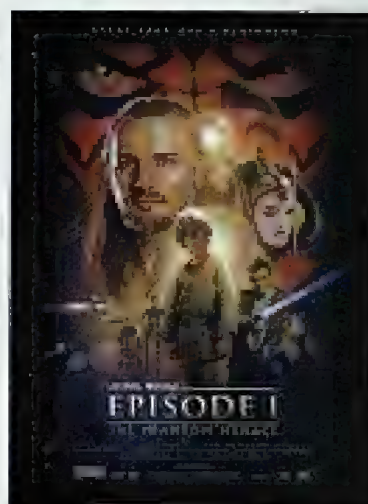
Okay, my high school was having its 50th birthday the other weekend. Specifically, Thomas Downey High School in Modesto, California, George Lucas' alma mater. George could not attend, but both his sisters were there, and up for auction was a large 27" X 40" Episode I poster signed by George Lucas. Well, to make a long story short, I acquired it for \$570. It also

BY STEVE SANSWEET

comes with the letter from George's secretary presenting the poster to the Alumni Association. So, of course, my question is: Have I done something ridiculously or only moderately stupid? Or have I by some miracle made a spectacular investment? Thanks.

ERIC MILLER
Modesto, CA

Okay, so you expect me to say my boss' signature on a poster isn't worth the money you paid for it? Is this a trick question, Eric? Actually, it's a multi-part question, only you didn't realize it. You paid



CL

"OKAY, SO YOU EXPECT ME TO SAY MY BOSS' SIGNATURE ON A POSTER ISN'T WORTH THE MONEY YOU PAID FOR IT?." —STEVE SANSWEET

ATTACK OF THE CLONES Obi-Wan Kenobi

about the going auction rate for an authenticated George Lucas signature on a Star Wars item. It depends on the venue and who's bidding, of course. Last year at Dragon*Con, an Episode II baseball cap with George's signature on the brim—and a letter of authenticity from Lucasfilm—went for \$700 at a charity auction. I can practically guarantee you that 99% of the so-called George Lucas autographs on eBay are 100% bogus, even when the seller provides his own "certificate of authenticity." So a letter from Lucasfilm that you know is real is an important plus and definitely boosts the value. I have to assume that you bought the autographed poster because you thought it was a cool thing to have, that you want the bragging rights, that you'll display it, and that the money is going to a good cause. As to whether any collectible is a good investment for the future, only time will tell. That's the kind of advice I never give.

WHAT JAWAS CARRY LUNCH IN

My name is Joe, and I'm 14 years old. In December of 2000, I went to the local Hallmark gift shop. There I found reproduction lunch boxes for Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back. But they were only about half the real size. Was one ever made for Return of the Jedi? Any help here would be hot.

JOE BARRETT
Via the Internet



Well I'm happy

to turn up the heat a bit.

These great little metal lunch boxes are actually 75% of the size of the originals, but they are authentic in design and make a really beautiful collectible—especially at \$10.95. They're from a large line of Hallmark School Days reproduction lunch boxes from the 1950s through the 1970s. The boxes are individually numbered on the bottom and have hangtags that double as a Certificate of Authenticity and give some information on lunch boxes and the Star Wars saga. Boxes for all three of the classic films were made: Star Wars in 1999, and The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi in 2000. You should be able to find the Jedi box at another Hallmark store, or ask the first store to order it for you. If that fails, the Empire and Jedi boxes were available for purchase online at www.hallmark.com as of this writing. The Star Wars box was retired in December, but it might still be available on some retailers' shelves. Happy hunting!

REMEMBER THE HOLIDAY SPECIAL?

It having been the holiday season, I thought I'd share with all Insider readers an ad I cut out 24 years ago. It's from a San Francisco Bay Area newspaper advertising the continued release of Star Wars during the Christmas season of 1977. For a long time I thought that this was some kind of a new poster made especially for the season, but I never saw it at a theater and have never seen it in any comprehensive poster guides. I can only conclude that this was a special seasonal ad slick. But I don't know if it was part of some national campaign or a Bay Area in-joke. Have you ever seen it?

MICHAEL ENDICOTT
Portland, OR

Joke? "Greetings to all the followers of the Death Star! —Grand Moff Tarkin." "Heartiest Felicitations! —C3PO" "Best wishes to all friends of the Empire. —Darth Vader." "Best Wishes and Happy Horizons. —Han Solo." JOKE?

No. Well not in the conventional sense at least. It was a giddy Twentieth Century Fox marketing staff, thrilled beyond belief that Star Wars, which had opened in May, was still playing in quite a few theaters in the U.S. in December. This was a national ad

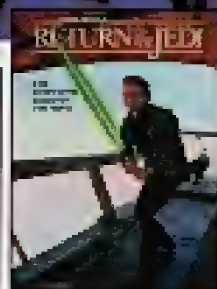
that ran in areas where theaters were still booking the movie, a true phenomenon considering that there were such new flicks as Close Encounters of the Third Kind and Saturday Night Fever vying for the almighty buck. The size of the



ad is certainly out of proportion for the one theater in the area playing the film, but the success of the movie and the possibility of drawing families back at the holidays were thought to justify the expense. As for the comeliness of the ad, well, we hope Peter Cushing and Alec Guinness didn't see it. It's a fun part of Star Wars heritage. Thanks for sharing, Michael.

I DON'T NORMALLY DO THIS ...

My friend has an original double record set from A New Hope. It is in almost perfect condition. Not knowing much about collectibles, I'm writing to you to see



If you could give me an estimate of how much this would be worth, I also have an original picture storybook from *Return of the Jedi* by Random House. I would also like to know how much this could be worth. I am an avid *Star Wars* fan and love the magazine. Thanks a lot!

JOSHUA LONG
Amsterdam, NY

While I normally pass on "how much is this worth?" letters, Joshua's was so polite and friendly that I couldn't resist this young man's entreaty. And he was asking for a friend at the start. Plus he drew me a nifty sketch of an A-wing fighter, which I get to keep. Not many people have record players any more, which probably wouldn't make a difference since a collector wouldn't play the double-record *Star Wars* album and risk scratching it. What do you mean by almost perfect? Is the black and white information sheet still there? Is the colorful, folded space battle poster still with the album? Are the disks themselves in great, playable condition? While the last *Tamart's Price Guide to Worldwide Star Wars Collectibles* lists the album at \$15 to \$25, I'd say the death of the vinyl makes the low end of that range difficult to get unless the album and poster are mint. The

book, while delightful, is also abundant, and might fetch \$3 in great condition.

AS IN "XXXL"

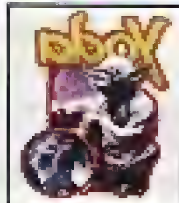
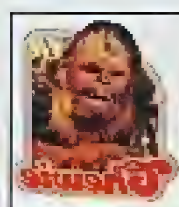
I'm the *Star Wars* movies' biggest fan—in more ways than one! I can't find *Star Wars* T-shirts in my size. Is there a way to get iron-on transfers so I could make my own?

DARIN MARRS
Weatherford, TX



Good question, Darin. There are lots of full-figured folks and little in the way of regularly manufactured licensed goods to fit them. The make-your-own-T-shirt shop craze was hitting its stride when *Star Wars* came out. Factors Inc., which was also the Fan Club licensee for the first year of its existence, did an extensive line of transfers for the first and second films. Ballantine also published *The Star Wars Iron-On Transfer Book* at \$6.95, which

contained 16 different designs but is best known for its truly kitschy cover. (Our heroes and villains in T-shirts? What were they thinking?) The bad news is that there haven't been many new *Star Wars* T-shirt transfers in about 20 years. The good news is that you can still pick up the Classic ones fairly easily on eBay. If you do, take them to a T-shirt shop or dry cleaner for a professional transfer job. Your home iron won't be hot enough or have enough pressure to do the job right. And watch out for folks who have torn apart the poorly selling Ballantine book and sell the pages individually. Hold out for a complete book at one-tenth the price.



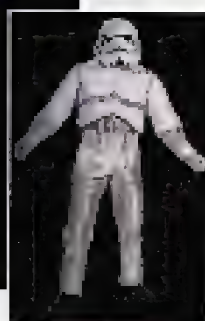
LET'S TALK METAL BIKINI

I've been searching for about a year now for a company that sells *Star Wars* costumes—not the kids' kind made out of cloth and vinyl, but hard materials like metal and fiberglass. Costumes

such as Boba Fett, a Stormtrooper or an AT-AT driver would be great. Where can I find a catalog of these?

MICHAEL CURRIN
Farmington, NM

The reason you've searched so hard for so long is that no such catalog exists... yet. For many years Lucas Licensing has pondered whether to authorize the manufacture of high-end replica costumes of fans' favorite characters, such as those you mention. There have been great static manikins



made by Don Post and one by Rubies, but nothing wearable. One legitimate concern has been that at "official" events, the public might be confused by whether costumed characters were Lucasfilm employees or fans whose actions weren't controlled by Lucasfilm. But as fans started making costumes themselves and showing up at such events, the point became moot. Lucas Licensing is now reconsidering the replica costume issue, and there might be some exciting news soon on this front. Stay tuned! ☺

SCOUTING FOR ANSWERS?

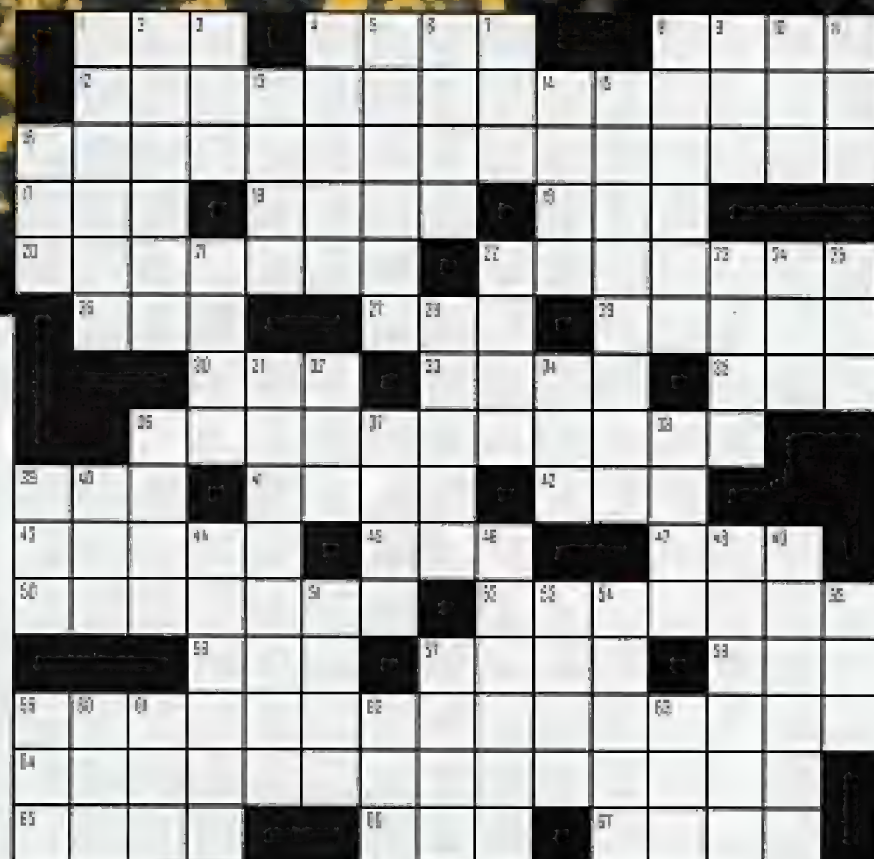
Please send your questions and comments about *Collectibles* to: SCOUTING THE GALAXY, P.O. Box 2698, Petaluma, CA 94953-2698. Or you may e-mail them to scoutsgalaxy@att.net, making sure to put SCOUTING in the subject line. Individual replies aren't possible because of time constraints, but we'll answer the questions of broadest interest in the column. Letters are edited for grammar, sense, and length.

SONGS OF THE MOS EISLEY CANTINA

BY MIKE SELINKER

ACROSS

- 1 Disaster Amin
4 British boarding school
8 What Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan's "diplomatic" visit was really
12 Power Station single that makes the tauntauns' toes tap?
16 Boyz II Men hit that's a favorite among Ewoks?
17 Word before "Money Python's Flying Circus"
18 Singer of "99 Luftballons"
19 Bullfight cheer
20 Grid of gunfire
22 Republican vehicle, for short
26 Smuggler who taught Han how to make the Kessel Run
27 Author Umberto
28 Biblical poem
30 Hit with one's starfighter
38 Type of sea
35 Rebel result at Yavin
36 Crystals ditty that gets the Gungans hopping?
39 It's found in a pod
41 ___ Domini
42 Bar-based quiz network: Abbr.
43 Benjamin of *Demolition Men*
45 Long-legged bird
47 Prefix meaning "tail"
50 Gestures toward Imperial admirals
52 Actor's day-to-day money



UNBEKNOWNST TO OBI-WAN, HIS EARLY CAREER AS A SALESMAN WOULD ONE DAY SERVE HIM WELL AS A JEDI...

- 56 Turf
57 *The Ghost and Mrs. ___* (1947 fantasy film)
58 "Star Wars" to U.S. military strategists: Abbr.
59-64 John Lee country lament best heard in a debris field?
65 ___-Um (Dark Horse Comics Jedi Master)
66 Ganan ___ (Han's rival for Leia's affection)
67 Rickie's mom, to force
21 Scarlett's manor
22 Jacen or Jaina
23 Rebel ___ (Star Wars novel)
24 Inventor Whitney
25 Ubu's successor
28 Bounce, as off an asteroid
31 Slaughterhouse
32 ___ Calenger
34 Network which shows *The Book of Razzard*
36 Yaren ___ (Yavin historian)
37 The Last ___ (Young Jedi Knights gang)
38 "Come, ___" (words through a security buzzer)

DOWN

- 1 It won Elaine May a Golden Raspberry for Worst Director
2 ___ death (overemphasized)
3 "___ Mine" (Beatles song)
4 Rank of Sai-muni Boss SP4Kith in *Trancers at Soriana*
5 Jedi Academy student teacher
6 Gumbo veggie
7 Comm array
8 What trouble might come in
9 Kang's kid
10 One Day ___ Time
11 Post-grad degree
13 Feminizing suffix
14 Restaurant chain where each table has a syrup bar
15 "___ me off this rock" (Clay to C-SPD)
16 Server's collection
29 3-2-1 Contact network
40 Rebellion ___ (Time of Episodes IV through VI)
44 ___ Raiders
46 Undermines and succeeds, as Palpatine did to Yoda
48 Vapts again
49 One way to store digital files
51 Australian "Game"
53 Ragster isatara
54 Metallica's "Whenever ___"
55 Auditory chaos
57 Non stereo
58 Philosopher ___-ism
60 "Too ___" (Yoda, on Anakin)
61 Harem room
62 Like Jabba
63 Item for viewing *Star Wars*

ANSWERS FOR THIS PUZZLE APPEAR ON PAGE 84 OF THIS ISSUE

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

crafty and courageous handmaidens sounds great to us, and we're putting just such an article on our wish list for upcoming issues.

DEFENDING KENOBI

I just finished reading Issue #57, and I was appalled at your disrespect of Obi-Wan Kenobi.

First of all, in the Editor's Note you implied that only three characters (the droids and Anakin) appear in all six movies. Now, unless something has changed drastically since I saw the trilogy, Obi-Wan also appears in all the movies. I'll give you that he is a blue spirit in two of them, but he's still there, greater and more powerful than you could possibly imagine, and you can't just brush him off.

I went on to read the "Rebel Rumbblings." You called Obi-Wan "shifty," "untrustworthy," and

Who's That Rodian?

I'm writing concerning Insider issue #57. I thought it was great! One of the articles I really enjoyed was "Auna Slog's Convention Diary." It let us really get a closer look at the actress's life and how down-to-earth she is. I hope we'll be able to see more of this kind of article in the future.

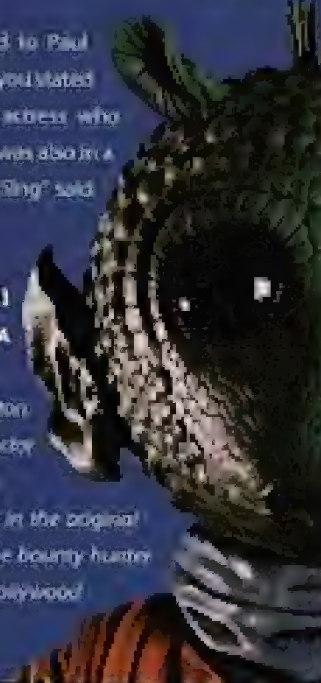
In the diary, Michonne referred to Paul Blake as Greedo. In another insider, you stated that Maria De Aragon was the actress who played Greedo. Maria De Aragon was also in a list of actors/actresses that "Auna Slog" said she had met.

Who's Greedo?

Clayton O'Dell
Thomaston, GA

We're speechless. Shame on you, Clayton, for sending our Greedo-loving Art Director into a splintering frenzy. Here's Greedo.

By the way, Paul played Greedo in the original British shoot, and Maria donned the bounty hunter dress for pick-up shots done on a Hollywood soundstage.



even "dastardly." How dare you! Do you realize where the others would be without Obi-Wan?

I will admit he has a tendency to lie, but always for a good cause, never with reckless abandon. If Obi-Wan said Owen was his brother, you can bet he had a good reason for wanting Luke to think that.

Kot Helgeson
Bloomington, IL

Thanks for pointing out our technical foul, Kot. You're right—if you count shifty, untrustworthy, dastardly blue spirits, then Obi-Wan has appeared in all of the Star Wars movies. At least we don't have to take his word for it!

GETTING HER SCOTTISH UP

I am a very even-tempered person. However, there are some

things that get my Irish up, and you managed to do that with your latest issue. I don't know whether you were trying to be funny or facetious in constantly criticizing Obi-Wan, my favorite Star Wars character. He is a wise Jedi Knight, and I'm sure there are good reasons for the things

he's said and done.

Now that I'm done defending him, I want to say thank you for keeping us current on what Ewan McGregor is doing, as he is my favorite actor.

Amy Rannells
Waterloo, IA

Okay, okay, Amy. Noting the phrase "Amy and Ewan Forever" in your email, and recognizing that every letter we've received on this issue comes from an earnest devotee of the young Scottish actor, we realize there's no way to compromise on this issue except by placing the blame firmly on Sir Alec Guinness, who played the older and wiser Kenobi. No doubt Obi-Wan as portrayed by the hunky young McGregor is a paragon of integrity, incapable of obfuscation now that he's escaped the influence of the Toydarian-blinking Qui-Gon Jinn.

SPOILER ALERTS

I've been a subscriber for a couple of years now, and I think that the magazine normally turns out great. I just got issue 57, and I felt that I had to write. In the "Who's Who" article, there was a warn-



Car Wars

I'm a huge Star Wars fan, so much so that I display it proudly upon my car. Thought you all might like to see it.

Ashley Hodges
Colorado Springs, CO

We love seeing the really places and awesome paint jobs, as long as they don't include depictions of the Empire's robed but flawed designs of the Death Star on the side of a van. We've had enough of those.

Ewan Mania

Thanks for the issue with Obi-Wan on the front. But, oh, how I loathe that beard! However, I did get to meet Ewan McGregor (unbearded!) this August when he was acting as Chieftain for the Grieff Highland Games in Scotland. He's absolutely wonderful in person and took



the time to invite my friend Teresa (on the left) and me inside the reserved area to chat privately and have pictures taken. I'm really hoping that you'll get him to come to the Star Wars Celebration II. See you in May!

Katasha Bieberfeld
Philadelphia, PA

No, it's not officially a contest, but sometimes a letter deserves special recognition, even if we did have to trim it down from novella length. This one's in response to our "Six Degrees of Anakin Skywalker" challenge in issue #57.

Six Degrees Times Two

Hey, you know what is a fun variation on this game? Finding a single film with more than one Star Wars actor in it. For example, did you ever watch Harrison Ford as Jack Ryan talking to James Earl Jones as his superior, and suddenly a light bulb goes on over your head because, in a way, Han Solo is talking to Darth Vader?

Practically any movie made in the 80s that features lots of little people has some cross-reference capabilities with the Ewoks, Jawas, and Ugnaughts. Willow is a good example, if a trifle obvious since it's a Lucasfilm movie.

Carrie Fisher remarked on the Sci-Fi Channel a few years back that several of her ersatz Munchkin co-stars in *Under the Rainbow* were Ewoks she'd worked with on *Return of the Jedi*.

The coolest example of this trend is *Time Bandits*. Four of the six Bandits had each been in at least one of the Star Wars productions: Kenny "Fidget" Baker and the late Jack "Wally" Purvis had both been in Episodes IV-VII. Purvis



gives a masterful performance, and Mike "Og" Edmonds is a familiar face to anyone who's seen him tucked inside Jabba's tail, rowing it like an oar, in *Star Wars to Jedi: The Making of a Saga* (he also played Logray, I believe).

Speaking of *Making of a Saga*, guess who else pops up in *Time Bandits*? None other than the human Jabba, Declan Mulholland! He's one of Robin Hood's Merry Men. So, watch for a

scene where "Jabba" escorts "Pagloo," "Teebo," "Logray," and a fourth former Ewok into Sherwood Forest. (And for good measure, Henry Jones Senior, AKA, Sean Connery, is in *Time Bandits* as well!)

There are plenty more films with more than one Star Wars actor in them. *Belmont* is a mini-Star Wars reunion, although none of the alumni share any scenes. Lando Calrissian plays O.A.

ing on the first page of the article, and since I had not read *Star by Star* at the time, I knew to skip it. However, in the bookshelf column there was no disclaimer, and I learned of the ending of *Star by Star*. The warning was on the sidebar. Why not the whole article. Normally, the insider does a good job with spoiler information, so please be more careful next time.

Pete Gerard
Cory, Illinois

Pete wasn't the only one to point out our gaffe. We originally had a spoiler warning at the top of that article. When some rocket scien-

tist (who shall go nameless but has the initials Dave Gross) foolishly approved moving it to the sidebar during layout. A dozen letters, an angry phone message, and two poorly spelled notes tied to rocks thrown through our window have convinced us that it was a big mistake, and we'll be extra careful in future.

ADVANCED (SIX) DEGREES

James Earl Jones did *Sommersby* with Richard Gere—who was in *Runaway Bride* and *Pretty Woman* with Julia Roberts—who did *Mary Kelly* with John Malkovich—who was in *Being John Malkovich*

directed by Spike Jonze—who is married to Sofia Coppola, the multi-talented woman who was not only a handmaiden to our lovely Padmé but also directed *The Virgin Suicides*—which had Mr. No-shower-scenes-in-Star Wars Hayden Christensen.

Now, going back to the Richard Gere/Julia Roberts leg, *Pretty Woman* was directed by Gary Marshall, brother of Penny Marshall—who had a role for awhile on the TV series *Happy Days*—which starred Henry Winkler who was in *Night Shift* (Winkler was also in *Heroes* with Harrison Ford) directed by Ron Howard and also featuring

Michael Keaton who was in the first movie of *Batman* with Billy Dee Williams who was in *Bongo and the Traveling All-Stars* with heavy-breather James Earl Jones.

Carol Baumeister
Alameda, CA

SETTLING A BET

I'm writing because of an argument that has been going on for over a year with a friend of mine concerning the Star Wars novels. She accepts only the movies, and what Mr. Lucas wrote, but I accept the books also.

From what I understand, Mr. Lucas works closely with the



Harvey Dent, Perkins plays Lt. Eckhardt, and Biggs Darklighter plays Thomas Wayne in the flashback scenes.

Force 10 from Navarone has four Star Wars actors in it, although I only spotted Leslie Schofield's name in the credits and am not sure what he looks like. But in one quick scene the other three alumni interact quite violently. If memory serves, Gold Leader is shot and

killed by Admiral Ozzel, who is then shot and killed by Han Solo.

Both Gold Leader and Admiral Ozzel have worked with Harrison Ford numerous times. Michael Sheard (Ozzel) appears in *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Raiders*, *Force 10*, and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (a film that qualifies with three Star Wars alumni, once you count the presence of Needa as Walter Donovan). Meanwhile Angus MacInnes (Gold Leader), whose name seems to change spellings every few films, costars with Ford in *A New Hope*, *Force 10*, and *Witness*. In *Witness*, Han Solo kills Gold Leader this time, by drowning him with a silo full of grain.

Angus MacInnes is also in a 1986 movie called *Strange Brew* (The Adventures of Bob and Doug McKenzie). He plays a hockey player/brewery worker/mental patient named Jean "Rosey" LaRose. In one memorable scene, several of the mental patients are forced to play hockey wearing stormtrooper-esque goalie padding, one team in white, the other in black. Dave Thomas as Doug McKenzie is in black armor and begins making Vaderian breathing noises and misquoting dialogue from the classic trilogy; brother Bob (Rick Moranis, in white armor) turns to Rosey and explains, "He saw Jedi seventeen times, eh!" How superb that he makes the comment to Gold Leader.



Angus MacInnes also has a small role in *Superman 2*. Now there's a movie in which you can't swing a dead cat without hitting a Star Wars actor! At the moment, it holds the record for

the most, although I always lose count and leave somebody out—or discover another the next time I watch it. Many of these crossover Star Wars actors were noted in past *Insider* articles. Here are some of the ones to watch for:

- Prison-guard Gold Leader tells Lex Luthor and Otis "Lights out" before realizing they are holograms.
- Lobot, who also played a Kryptonian elder, recites the poem "Trees" in the crystal teaching apparatus of the Fortress of Solitude.
- Reporter Admiral Merti explains to Valorum (General Zod) that the name of the planet is Earth, not Hoo-ston.
- In one scene, lunar astronaut Dack reports to Houston that he has spotted "a girl" and the NASA controllers he's talking to are Major Derlin from *Empire* and the guy who asks Luke if he wants a new R2 unit at the Massassi Base in *A New Hope*.

Alex Newborn
Florence, AL

authors of the different books, and he makes the storylines, and then the authors fill in the rest, making a book. Is this true, or does Mr. Lucas ask them to write a book, then they come up with the stories and get approval by him? I'm almost positive I've heard that Mr. Lucas does come up with the storylines, but my friend doesn't believe me.

Thanks for the great magazine.

Clayton O'Dell
Thomaston, GA

While you are far more broad-minded in your embrace of the Expanded Universe, Clayton, your canonical friend is correct that

George Lucas doesn't come up with all of the storylines for the Expanded Universe, though he does approve them in general. There's only so much of George to go around, but fortunately his parents taught him to share at an early age, and he continues to let others play in his sandbox, much to the benefit of those of us who just can't get enough Star Wars.

KEEP 'EM SEPARATE

I always look forward to the new *Insider*, and will always remain a subscriber.

Please do not include any more Expanded Universe (EU) material. And if you insist on

doing this, please consider the following constructive suggestions. Primarily, if you insist on including it, could you please keep all EU comments and articles in a separate EU section at the back? Or at least, do not mix EU comments into any of the other articles. For example, in issue 57, in the trivia questions on page 30, question 4 slips an EU non-canonical comment into the question set. This section should be reserved for official canon.

I know that many readers like the EU stuff. But every fan agrees on the canon; and with the new movies, you can easily fill maga-

zines for years without having to include anything else. No fan will skip articles about the canonical official stuff. But only the EU readers will read the EU stuff. I just simply do not like it. I did not like the Zahn, Anderson, or Perry stuff. The rest of the EU builds on this material. Continuity is great if you like the starting point, but I don't.

You might suggest that I simply skip the EU stuff in the *Insider*. Believe me, I make every attempt to do so. So, if you could at least leave any and all EU references to the separate EU section, then I will be able to skip it. For me, any EU reference

Model Citizen

I am a huge *Star Wars* fan and I run a little FX workshop out of my home. For the past year and a half, I have been building 1:1 scale custom vehicles for my 3 3/4-inch action figure collection.

My first such attempt was Obi-Wan Kenobi's hut. It turned out to be a nearly exact replica built entirely of wood. My second model was a full scale dewa Sandercrawler that took me all of a year to build and now measures a full 6 feet long and 3 1/2 feet tall. It was constructed out of foamboard and balsa wood, and it has since been on public display three times. An AT-AT walker measuring a full 4 1/2 feet high by 4 feet long was my third such model.



I am now in the process of building my largest model to date, a 35-foot-long replica of the *Tantive IV*. My hope is to have it completed for public display at my favorite local movie theater on opening day of Episode II.

You can see pictures of all of these models on my web page, michaelfright.homestead.com/michaelfright.html.

Michael Fright
Blackwood, NJ

*Michael's models are fabulous. If you'd like to see a 3 3/4-inch action-figure-scale model of the Mos Eisley cantina by H. G. Wells, pick up a copy of *Star Wars Gamer #8*, on sale now.*

within an article pretty much ruins the whole article.

Finally, the more Yoda in the *insider*, the better!

David Hudgins
Dallas, TX



Answers from page 68.

**Songs of the
Mos Eisley
Cantina**

In a perfect galaxy, each issue of Insider would be customized for each individual reader—making for a couple hundred thousand completely different magazines each month. Frankly, we're already pretty tired, so we'll stick with one Insider to rule them all. That's our way of saying, no, David, we won't eliminate Expanded Universe coverage or consign it to a non-canonical ghetto. On the other hand, we agree that many readers are interested in coverage of the movies themselves, so they'll always get premium space in Insider.

And we couldn't agree more with you about Yoda. Sure he's a bit cranky, but he's a Jedi Master you can trust, unlike some others we could mention—but won't!

FAN FAVORITES

Hey folks, love what you've done with the *insider*. Keep up the excellent work!

In all the *Star Wars* books, I think these are the most well written, most interesting, and most relevant to the films, so far.

1. *The Paradise Snare* by A.C. Crispin
2. *The Hutt Gambit* by A.C. Crispin
3. *Rebel Dawn* by A.C. Crispin
4. *Cloak of Deception* by James Luceno
5. *The Han Solo Adventures* by Brian Daley
6. *Heir to the Empire* by Timothy Zahn
7. *Dark Force Rising* by Timothy Zahn
8. *The Last Command* by Timothy Zahn
9. *Vector Prime* by R.A. Salvatore
10. *Jedi Quest* by Jude Watson

Sean Gates
King George, VA

Here's my personal top ten list, including everything except the latest, *Rebirth* and *Star By Star*, which I hadn't gotten to as of this writing.

1. *Vision of the Future* by Timothy Zahn
2. *Specter of the Past* by Timothy Zahn
3. *Heir to the Empire* by Timothy Zahn
4. *The Last Command* by Timothy Zahn
5. *Dark Force Rising* by Timothy Zahn
6. *The Truce at Bakura* by Kathy Tyers
7. *Vector Prime* by R.A. Salvatore
8. *Dark Tide I: Onslaught* by Michael Stackpole
9. *Dark Tide II: Ruin* by Michael Stackpole
10. *Champions of the Force* by Kevin J. Anderson

Bradley
Picoayune, MS

After much consideration, I have finally composed a top-10 list of my favorite *Star Wars* books. This list is subject to change as I read more books.

1. *Star by Star* by Troy Denning
2. *Conquest* by Greg Keyes
3. *Jedi Under Siege* by Kevin J. Anderson and Rebecca Moesta
4. *Rebirth* by Greg Keyes
5. *Balance Point* by Kathy Tyers
6. *The Defenders of the Dead* by Jude Watson
7. *The Rising Force* by Dave Wolverton
8. *Shadow Academy* by Kevin J. Anderson and Rebecca Moesta
9. *The Courtship of Princess Leia* by Dave Wolverton
10. *Promises* by Nancy Richardson

Star Wars Insider is in a category of its own. As usual, Issue 57 was spectacular. I especially enjoyed "Who's Who in the New Jedi Order." Thank you for providing such well-rounded coverage of the *Star Wars* galaxy.

Julie Gilbert
Bronchburg, NJ

Is there an official in-universe *Star Wars* calendar?

No, there isn't. Outside the *Star Wars* galaxy, we tend to use the Battle of Yavin as the zero-point, since it makes the first movie, *A New Hope*, the start. But, obviously, characters in the *Star Wars* universe don't sign correspondence with the date "32 years BBY."

Some authors have used numbers that look like official dates, but those are more for realistic window-dressing rather than any real attempt to formulate a calendar. Timothy Zahn used a "pre-Empire" dating convention in *Dark Force Rising*, when Luke is researching information about Jorus C'baoth.

The key thing preventing the establishment of a calendar is that, until Episode III comes out, we won't know for sure when the Empire came to power. That is the most logical place to restart a calendar at "0," but that date has yet to be nailed down.

We presume that the *Star Wars* characters do have a calendar that makes sense, but we as readers and viewers have yet to see it.

Also, remember that the term Sith specifically refers to the indoctrinated followers of a specific path of dark side lore. There can be other evil forces in the galaxy—the Expanded Universe includes quite a few Force-wielding malcontents who technically aren't Sith.

For more information about the ancient Sith, check out the *Jedi vs. Sith* comic series from Dark Horse Comics.

C-3PO, R2-D2, and the various pit and battle droids all act like living, breathing people, but they're machines. Besides the fact that it makes them more interesting, is there a reason they act like this?

One need only look at your desktop computer to find a partial answer to this question. How many times have you run a program for the first time to see a smiling, happy, bouncy, and ultimately annoying sprite there to help you learn the ropes. Some consumers are comforted by a certain amount of personality in their hardware and software. Certain droid manufacturers build this into their droids, to varying degrees of success.

fit, aside from Artoo's lovable personality, is that the droid has a near-symbiotic relationship with Luke's X-wing, with incredible response time. The flipside, though, is that no other droid can properly interface with Luke's X-wing since it has become so idiosyncratic.

If Boba Fett is so good, how does a blind guy with a stick kill him by accident?

I could probably dig up some plausible explanation, but when you get right down to it, karma doesn't care how hot a bounty hunter you are.

In *A New Hope*, Han goes up a ladder to fight off TIE fighters while Luke goes down the same ladder. But when they yell back and forth to one another, they are side-by-side! Shouldn't Han be above Luke?

Han is on top. The *Falcon's* gunnery wells have their artificial gravity canted at 90-degrees. When you climb up the ladder, you pass through a gravity discontinuity and down is suddenly redefined for you.

Answers to Your Star Wars Questions

Why can there be only two Sith? Wouldn't they stand a better chance of taking over the galaxy if they trained an army of evil warriors?

The Sith aren't numerous, but it's not for lack of trying. A long, long time ago, the Sith were legion, and their hunger for power led to internal strife that defeated their ventures time and again. After a bloody and ultimately wasteful effort at the Battle of Ruusan, the sole surviving Sith, Darth Bane, said enough is enough. He restructured the Sith order so that there could only be two at a time—a master and an apprentice. This methodology proved far more successful than that of his precursors. Bane's Sith were, after all, eventually able to conquer the galaxy.

Still, there is an undercurrent of anti-droid sentiment in the galaxy; check out the Mos Eisley Cantina scene for evidence of that. As a result, most droids are simple utilitarian automatons that few could ever grow to care about. It's what makes intolerance toward their kind so easy.

Some droids develop personalities as a side effect of not having a regular memory wipe. The advanced logic centers of droids accumulate quirks from developing their own solutions to problems. A personality is considered one of those quirks. However, these droids often have such improved performance that it's a fair trade-off.

As an example, Luke never gave Artoo-Detoo a full factory-recommended memory wipe in all their years together. The bene-

The same thing happens in the belly-gun. If you were to look at a cross-section of the *Millennium Falcon* during its escape from the Death Star, you'd see Han facing up and Luke facing down.

If Jabba's species, the Hutts, have neither males nor females, how come Jabba has slave girls? Also how come many, many *Star Wars* information books declare Jabba as male?

Day-to-day Hutt life really has no need for gender roles. Since Basic doesn't have a suitable genderless pronoun (the term "it" is kind of insulting to most), we tend to refer to a Hutt as "he" or "she," even though it's not biologically accurate. Commonly,

Illustration by Stan Shaw



most Hutts are referred to as "he" until they are pregnant with a brood, during which they become known as "she." Jabba the Hutt's depraved tastes were looked on with disdain by many Hutts, who thought his obsession with the female humanoid form perverse. Jabba's increase in power, however, led to many fellow Hutts imitating his particular brand of debauchery.

How do you turn a lightsaber on? Do you need the Force?

Only a true Force-sensitive can effectively wield a lightsaber, but turning it on is a pretty simple affair. Han is not a Jedi, yet he managed to switch on Luke's saber in *The Empire Strikes Back* for some simple taunt-aun-gutting. Either a button or a sliding switch triggers the blade to activate. Most lightsabers have a safety feature that deactivates them should they be dropped. These sabers also have switches that allow the user to "lock" the blade on; this allows Jedi or Sith to throw their lightsabers.

In the novel *The Crystal Star*, we're introduced to a dark side sect that uses

lightsabers with internal activation switches. You can't see or touch them from the outside, and must use the Force to trigger them.

Why is the writing on the Death Star in English lettering in *A New Hope*?

Although Basic is the common language of the *Star Wars* universe, there are many different alphabets used to express Basic in written form. The most commonly known to fans is Aurebesh, the text that appears on Anakin's read-out displays while he's in the Naboo starfighter. There are others, such as the Naboo futhark, and one that looks pretty much like written English. We're to assume that the naming of certain star-fighters comes from this alphabet; that's why we have X-wing fighters that look like Xs and not Δ -wing fighters that look like Δ s (xereks).

While that's the in-universe answer,

the real answer is that it was necessary for the audience to understand what Obi-Wan was doing in the scene where he deactivates the Death Star tractor beam, thus the signs were legible to terrestrial eyes.

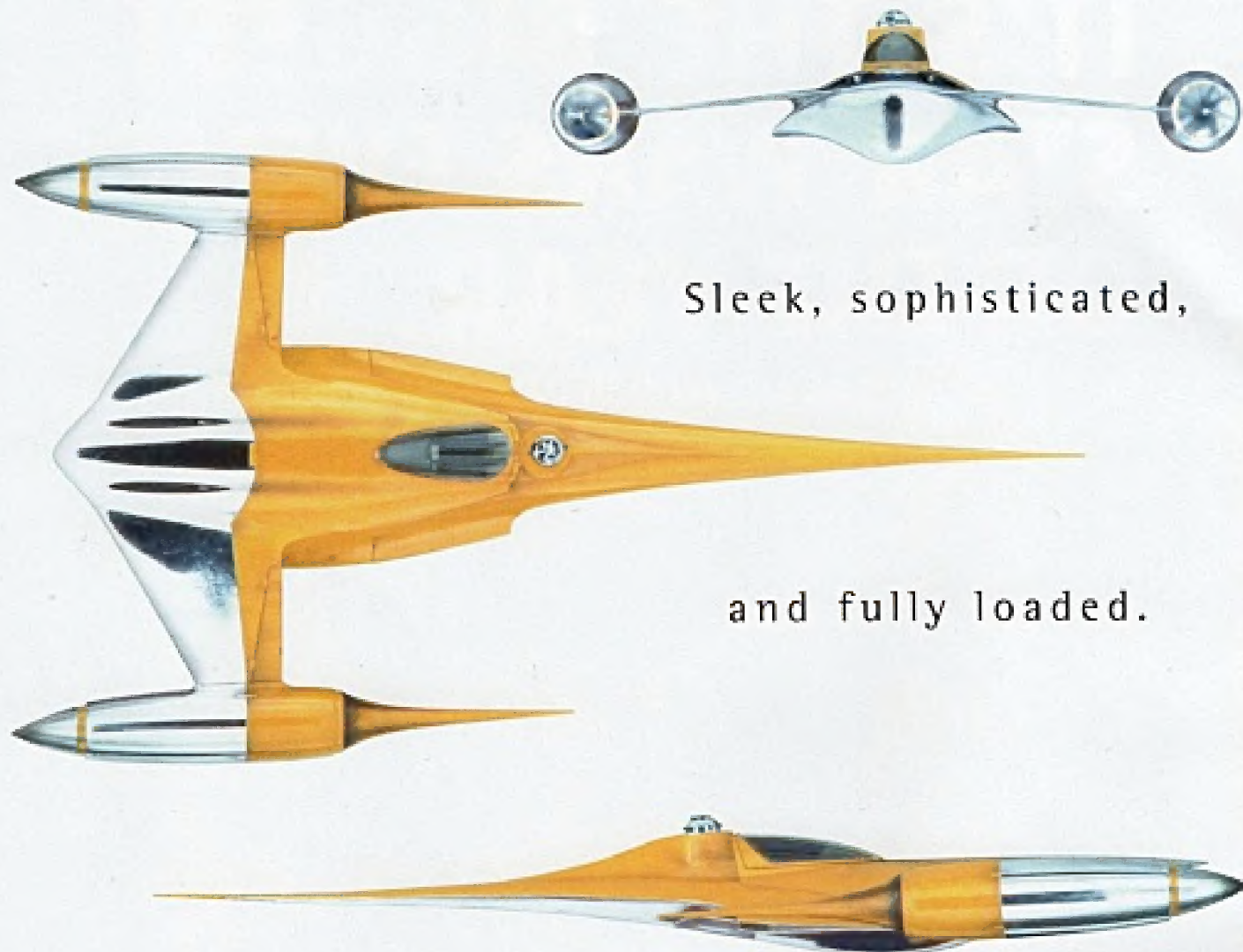
Where do droid names come from? Isn't there a limit to the number of different R2-unit names there can be?

The droid names used in the movies are merely fragments of much longer serial numbers. This makes sense when you think about it, since the number of letter-number combinations in droid naming conventions is pretty limiting. That's why you can have an Episode I-R5 unit named G8-R3 (he's on the Queen's starship). His name might have really been something like R5-X41238-G8-R3-3124-D2, and the middle portion is just what he is called. There are those masters that skip the whole letter-number thing and truly personalize their droids with a nickname—like Corran Horn's astromech named Whistler. ☺

QUESTIONS?

Do you have a *Star Wars* trivia question that you can't find the answer to? E-mail it to us at SWInsider@wizards.com (include Q&A in the subject line) or send it to Q&A, *Star Wars Insider*, P.O. Box 707, Renton, WA 98057.





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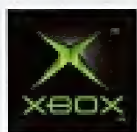
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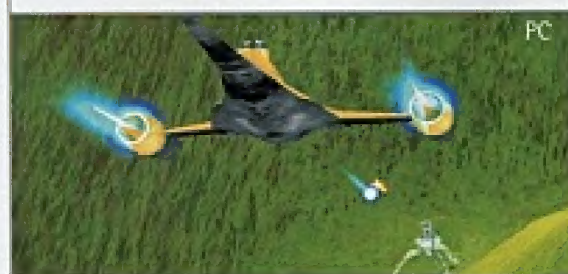
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